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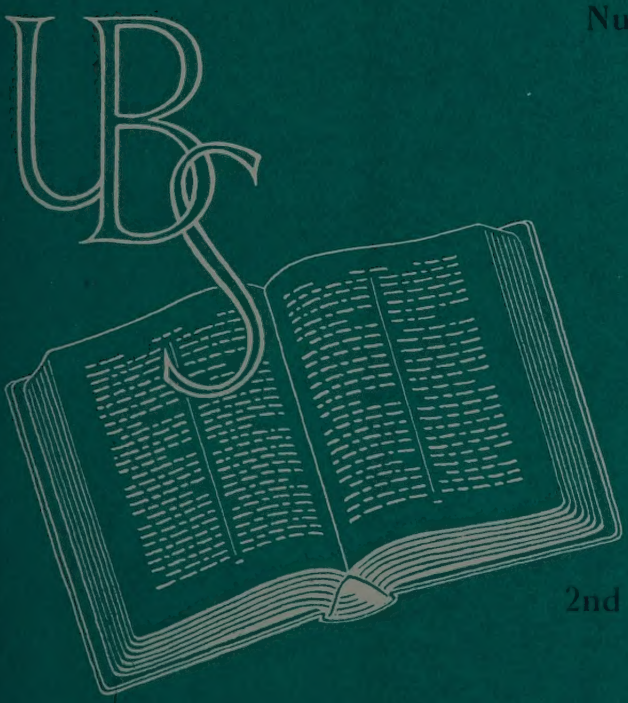

2nd Quarter
1956

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

SECOND QUARTER - 1956

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SOUTH-EAST ASIA—A WORLD OF PROMISE

by LATON E. HOLMGREN

The Scene

SOUTH-EAST ASIA is a kind of spiritually fertile crescent stretching from the South China Sea to the Bay of Bengal. Its population of 175 millions is predominantly Buddhist and Moslem. The Christian community is but a tiny fraction of the whole, in most areas less than 1%. About one person in every five living in South-East Asia can read or write, but millions listen to the radio, attend the movies and have a vote.

The area produces 65 per cent. of the world's tin, 90 per cent. of its natural rubber, vast supplies of oil, tea, rice, copra, quinine, sugar, hemp and many essential minerals. Almost any adult living in the Western world can remember the shortages and difficulties experienced during the recent war when the raw materials of South-East Asia were cut off by the Japanese.

To travel through the six countries that support this enormous population with these vast natural resources is to react alternatively with delight and dismay. My own notes made during recent visits to the area illustrate the point :

"The flight from Calcutta to Bangkok was made through the middle of the night by a Comet jet airliner. Its fantastic speed over sleeping villages unchanged for a thousand years dramatizes the contrasts of the world to which we minister. Thailand is a lovely land of nearly 20 million people whose chief business is raising rice. Along the river plains, rice fields stretch as far as the eye can see. Thailand is the 'Rice Bowl of the Orient'. These charming fields are owned and tilled by families who live in small groups along the canals which form a vast network of waterways through the countryside".

All this is pure delight. Then follows dismay :

"Thailand is crippled by poverty, disease and squalor. The literacy rate is appallingly low. The evangelical Christian community is a tiny minority of about 15,000 souls".

Still another example appears in notes made while sweltering in the lurid heat of Java :

"This week in Indonesia has provided an endless series of delightful surprises. Ever since London, I have been hearing of the rigors and dangers of life in Djakarta. Immigration officials were said to be the most surly in the world. Hotels were reported to be uninhabitable. Food is indigestible. Dangers are lurking in every street after dark and the white man is in peril of his life the moment the sun sets. The prospect was grim. The reality, however, has been delightful. I had far less difficulty in clearing customs in Djakarta than I do in my home city of New York. I was shown every courtesy by immigration and health officials. The hotel in which I am staying is a charming series of cottages in the midst of a lush tropical garden. The service is excellent. The food could be better ; it could also be worse. As for being white (and American at that), it seems only to improve my position

wherever I go. Nightfall makes no difference in my personal safety. I move about as I please when I please".

If the story ended there, it would be almost idyllic. But these notations appear further along in the journal :

"Indonesia consists of nearly 80 million people, only 20 per cent. of whom are literate. There are 250 spoken languages in the archipelago, but only 48 have been reduced to writing. The nation is enjoying its new freedom from foreign rule, but there is insufficient vigilance on the part of the common man regarding this precious possession. Two ambitious forces are seeking to snatch it from him: (1) Communism, which operates openly and boldly throughout the country, is making a desperate bid for control. It speaks convincingly to the poverty and misery of the people. (2) Fanatical nationalism is sparked by a wildly reactionary Moslem revival that is designed to force a religious state upon the country. The evangelical Christian community consists of about 2½% of the total population".

The challenge

To enter sympathetically into the heart of South-East Asia is then to be torn between hope and despair, faith and fear. We may rejoice in the remarkable achievement of Christian missions in these lands, but we are also stricken with the unregenerate millions who remain. We may applaud the increasing literacy of the people, but we are alarmed by an increase in population which outstrips our best efforts. We may be grateful for the years of friendly empire which encouraged a Christian witness in these lands, but we must fall prostrate in repentance because we made so little of the opportunity. It is astonishing to discover how little of our basic vocabulary, political and religious, is understood in this part of the world. Great words which have achieved their meaning for us at the cost of men's lives and fortunes—words like faith and freedom, liberty and democracy—these words are thin and hollow where men must barter liberty for security and faith for a full stomach. There is much here that is disturbing, even frightening. But there is also much that, under God, is full of promise.

As several before me have observed, there are three great forces at work in Asia to-day : revolutionary upheaval, messianic nationalism and imitation of the West. Each presents both an obstacle and an opportunity in South-East Asia to Christian missions in general and the Bible cause in particular.

The whole of Asian life is in revolution. "These people are in full revolt", said the House of Bishops in Honolulu last September, "against foreign political and economic control, against colonialism and imperialism. They are in revolt against age-old poverty and misery, no longer willing to accept passively gross inequalities of fortune. The earthly fate of hundreds of millions is at stake in their desperate efforts to conquer intolerable physical poverty. Their humanity is asserting itself against all that destroys humanity". Because we come from nations that have both inspired and inherited the fears and resentments of Asia towards the West, this revolutionary spirit is an obstacle to our effective Christian witness. But because we have a Book that tells of a Saviour who looked upon frightened, diseased, starving humanity "with compassion", this very revolutionary spirit becomes our great new evangelistic opportunity.

A second notable force in the area to-day is a kind of fanatical nationalism with its resultant East-West tension. There is a kind of deliberate and studied self-affirmation of the East in the face of the West and it is noticeable everywhere. Again, my travel notes remind me that "there was hardly a moment in the journey when it wasn't apparent. Some is blatant and antagonistic. More is silent and subversive. It was at the Bandung Conference, whose indecisive conclusions were far less important than the meeting itself, the first frank attempt to formulate world coloured opinion . . . . It was in Singapore where the first free elections in the colony's history were held during our Bible Society conference there. The results rocked the place, for the victors, many of doubtful political vintage, won hands down on an anti-colonial platform . . . . It was in Saigon where we spent two anxious hours refuelling. In that torn city, the conflict had filled the streets with hot heads and hot lead. One thing was clear from the confused pattern of struggling parties : such chaos could only breed disaster for freedom and democracy . . . . It was even in Bangkok, normally friendly and unconcerned. A mild anti-American sentiment was stirring and one official remarked that while Siam was grateful for all the aid she was receiving from America, she had no desire to become the 49th state".

The Church's response

The point is, the Church in South-East Asia is not unaffected by all this. Nowhere, except in China, is she militantly anti-western, but nevertheless, she seems to be falling prey to a subtle form of alienation from her distant brethren in Christ. There is a great deal of talk about "indigenous leadership" with its coveted goal of a completely nationalized Church. Prevailing weaknesses are said to be the result of inferior practices introduced by the missionary. Failure to speak with commanding power to its contemporaries is often said to be due to the presence of so many foreign voices in the national Church. The future success of the Christian cause is frequently thought to be in direct proportion to the increase in national leadership and the corresponding decrease in foreign personnel.

Everyone must applaud the efforts to enlarge the leadership and enhance the witness of the Church in all quarters of the world and certainly the Church in South-East Asia needs all the indigenous strength it can muster for the days just ahead. But much of the sentiment I heard expressed along these lines seemed to take its rise less from lofty Christian motives than from subtle surrender to prevailing social and political pressures. It was less prophetic than nervous. The misguided claims to messianic election of the new nations of Asia could mislead even the Elect. In this it could become an imposing obstacle to the rapid spread of the Christian message throughout the area.

But it can also become our golden opportunity. While governments are everywhere yielding to and even encouraging racial and national cleavages, the Church of Christ can be courageously and prophetically calling men to higher ground. It can state and demonstrate that

> "In Christ there is no east or west,
> in Him no south or north;
> But one great fellowship of love
> Throughout the whole wide earth".

Certainly no one engaged in Bible Society activity, with its 1,090 tongues, can long remain a victim of the nationalist heresy. The man with the Book can never forget that he is part of a fellowship "where there is neither Jew nor Greek .... Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free : but where Christ is all in all".

Yet a third force everywhere evident in South-East Asia is the desire to assimilate as much from the West as possible. This interest in western achievements is directed primarily to our technical skills and industrial progress, and if this be all we teach, we shall have created the most insurmountable obstacle of all to the evangelisation of South-East Asia. The history of Japan is an impressive reminder that it is possible for a nation to rise to world power through technology alone, largely learned from the West, and be destroyed in the process. Our Christian opportunity in Asia lies precisely at this point, for we have a Book that reminds men that it is possible to gain the whole world and lose one's own soul. Asia is eager to learn from the West and we must give her the Book that tells of God's eternally redemptive purpose for all mankind, His Sovereign Lordship over East and West.

The central Christian task must be, therefore, the distribution of the Word of God to the millions in this strategic region. How this task is being fulfilled by faithful servants of the Bible cause may be read in the following pages of this journal. In their efforts, and in the Book they offer, lies a world of promise.

THE HAND OF GOD ON WORK IN BURMA

by H. C. Willans

I. General setting and religious situation

BURMA has just celebrated the 8th anniversary of her independence, with parades and festivities suitable to this auspicious day. At the head of the Independence Day honours' list was the name of Lord Mountbatten, on whom Burma's highest honour was bestowed. A special feature of the celebrations was the presence of Sir Hubert Rance, the last British Governor of Burma, paying a return visit as an honoured guest of the government. The conferring of these honours, so soon after the notable visit of the Russian leaders Marshal Bulganin and Mr. Krushchev, is in line with Burma's declared policy of seeking to be friendly with all nations and avoiding identifying herself with power blocs.

In recent months other State visitors have been welcomed to Burma, and the Prime Minister, U Nu, has made goodwill visits to many countries, including Russia and Yugoslavia, Britain and the U.S.A. Thus does Burma seek to steer a political middle course and to take her share in fostering world peace.

Burma's economic links with other nations follow a similar pattern. Her rice goes to many countries irrespective of their political colour, and she has trade or barter agreements with many lands ; Rangoon newspapers on Independence Day carried large industrial advertisements of firms in Japan,

Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany; and foreign experts are helping Burma to develop her resources. Some of the leading industries have been nationalised; in others such as oil, the mining of metals and the blending of tea, the government has made joint agreements with foreign firms to develop them.

But Burma's biggest industry is still rice, and she depends mainly on the export of rice for foreign currency with which to buy consumer goods, machinery, etc. In 1956 she hopes to be able to export two million tons of rice—the highest figure since the war. The post-war world food shortage kept prices high for a time and Burma's rice exports brought in funds sufficient for her to draw up and launch big schemes for building and for State welfare. But greater competition in the last year or two caused a sharp fall in the price of rice, and the consequent drop in Burma's exchange reserves has led to restrictions on imports and some slowing down of the development programmes. But Burma's resources are large and she can afford to wait. That in only 8 years of independent rule Burma has planned and developed so much is a matter for congratulation, the more so when it is remembered that she has constantly been engaged in dealing with armed rebellion.

In spite of many problems at home, Burma is taking an important place in world affairs and making her contribution to the solving of world problems. Both at home and abroad her Prime Minister is held in affection and respect, and Burma's debt to him is beyond measure. In this predominantly Buddhist country people of all faiths have reason to be grateful to U Nu for his zeal and tolerance. As a devout Buddhist he was largely responsible for the building of the World Peace Pagoda and the holding of the Sixth Buddhist World Council near Rangoon; and he has again and again urged Buddhists to a greater devotion to their faith. But his words of "recall to religion" have been addressed not to Buddhists only; he has called upon Christians and adherents of other faiths also to practise their religion more faithfully.

Christians in Burma were greatly encouraged by a notable gesture of goodwill which the Prime Minister made last year. In the course of a foreign tour U Nu visited the Holy Land and, remembering his Christian friends, he brought back to Burma crosses of olive wood and bottles of Jordan water. These were presented to the heads of the churches at a ceremony in the President's House. In the presence of an assembly of church leaders, the Roman Catholic Archbishop received crosses and water on behalf of his Church and Dr. Hla Bu, President of the Burma Christian Council, received them on behalf of the Protestant churches.

It is interesting to note that in 1955 for the first time the Burma Christian Council held study courses on Buddhism. The lectures were given by a Christian professor of Rangoon University and were well attended. They aroused a desire among Christian workers to learn more of the religion which most of their neighbours follow. Too often in the past have Christians lived in isolation from their Buddhist neighbours.

The churches in Burma have also become conscious of their need to know more about their Christian neighbours in other lands of South-East Asia. Although Burma has a long frontier with Thailand, there is little travel between the two countries except by air, and Burmese and Thai Christians have little opportunity of meeting. Last year the Burma Christian Council

invited a Thai Christian Goodwill Mission to come, and four leaders of the churches in Thailand visited Burma and were enthusiastically received by the local congregations wherever they went. Burmese hosts and Thai guests alike seemed surprised to find how much they had in common. They felt that both sides had gained much from the visit, and they had encouraged each other as minority groups in Buddhist lands.

Education is highly esteemed in Burma. It has long been so, for every village monastery had its Buddhist school and it was the tradition for every boy to attend. For this reason Burma has always ranked high for literacy among Asian countries. Since the last war the demand for higher education has strikingly increased. Government and private High Schools are all full, with long waiting lists. Many Rangoon schools have double sessions so that one set of scholars can use the classrooms in the morning and another set in the afternoon. There are several schools with over 2,000 children attending. Numbers at the University have also multiplied and the authorities are hard pressed to build hostels enough to accommodate them. The youth of Burma seeks knowledge and demands education as its birthright, and high priority is given in government planning to the provision of education for all.

II. Post-war activity of the Bible Society

The Bible Society reopened its work in Burma after the war with an extensive programme of printing. Not only had we to reprint our own pre-war versions, but we had taken over responsibility also for all the Baptist versions which the American Baptist Mission had until then printed at its own press. We have printed Scriptures in 22 Burma languages since the war, including the whole Bible in 6 languages, the New Testament in a further 6 languages and Gospels in 10 more. The Bibles and several of the Testaments were printed by photography in London, and the remainder from type in Rangoon. Gradually we have built up our stocks again and now we are able to satisfy the needs of the churches for the Scriptures in all the major Burma languages.

The full count of Burma's languages is over 100, and translation work is going on all the time. Even during the war there were translators at work in Burma, and we have added several new languages to the B.F.B.S. list, besides many new books in languages already listed. Much translating waits to be done. Although we have the New Testament in four languages of the Chin group, no Chin language in Burma has yet any book of the Old Testament. Steadily the work goes on, and slowly the gaps are being filled, but this is work which cannot be rushed.

Since the war there have been changes in our methods of Scripture distribution. Whereas we used to employ as many as 30 colporteurs and circulate up to 100,000 books a year, now we have 3 colporteurs and the circulation runs between 30,000 and 50,000. For a number of good reasons large-scale colportage has not been possible in post-war conditions. We are selling many more Bibles in the Bible House shop than in pre-war days. But our biggest sales are to church leaders in the districts who hold stocks from which to supply the churches in their area. We allow them a small discount and we pay freight charges, so that Christians in the remotest districts can get the Bibles at the same price as those who live in Rangoon. We are selling far more Bibles and Testaments than before, and most Christian homes now have a Bible or a Testament.

But our sales of Gospel portions are less than they should be in so literate a country. We constantly urge preachers to use the Gospels more in their evangelistic work, and to enlist their church members in Scripture distribution campaigns, but the response has been less than we hoped for. It is our aim to increase the number of those who will personally commend to their neighbours the treasures they have found in the Bible, making use of everyday contacts to spread the Gospel. We think of a Karen worker who, when forced to spend Christmas in hospital in much pain and weakness, asked for Gospels in four languages to pass on to other patients and to members of the hospital staff.

An important development of recent years has been the growing emphasis on Bible Sunday in the churches. A large section of the Church which formerly got its Bibles from its own denominational press, knew little of the Bible Societies and their world-wide work. Now each year the churches receive in good time for Bible Sunday material in one or more of nine different languages to tell them about the Bible Societies and to help them in preparing for their Bible Sunday services. Bible Sunday is more and more widely observed each year, on the Second Sunday in Advent by churches of the Anglican tradition and on the third Sunday in August by the Free Churches.

The churches are coming to think increasingly of the Bible Society as *their* Society, and they support us with growing generosity. Whereas local contributions seldom amounted to K.5,000 before the war, they now amount to almost K.30,000 a year. From city churches and from remote villages, contributions come in day by day, assuring us afresh of the love which Christian people in Burma have for the Word of God and of their eagerness to help to make it available to every man in his own language.

We are thankful that in all the changes of these days of transition our work in Burma can go on without hindrance. We have full freedom to print and distribute the Scriptures, and through the disturbed conditions of the rebellions, we have been able to send them out to all parts of the country without serious loss.

We cannot foresee how Bible Society work will develop in the coming years, but we believe the Hand of God is upon it and He will make it plain.

The following additional notes are taken from the annual report of the Burma Agency for the year 1955 :

Without the Bible we should have no Gospel to preach, and it is good that we have a Bible Sunday each year when we remember afresh what the Bible means to us, and give thanks for those who brought it to us. Each year in our Bible Sunday appeal we urge every church to keep a supply of Scriptures always ready, so that everyone who is interested in the Bible may be able to get a copy at once, and so that evangelistic workers may never be without a supply of Gospel portions. On this special day in Burma we are always conscious of the way the Bible links together people of different languages and races. One Rangoon church not far from the Bible House has four different congregations worshipping there at different times of the day, in

Telugu, Sgaw Karen, Chinese and English. The language differs at each of the services but the Book from which they read is the same.

In a church in the Northern Shan State, the Bible Sunday congregation of 500 people represented ten different languages, Shan, Kachin, Karen, Burmese, Indian, Chinese, Chin, Taungthu, Lahu and Lisu. There were prayers in three languages and anthems in four languages, but the theme of the sermon was the one Book which all present could read in his own tongue.

Scripture circulation for the year 1955 amounted to 6,418 Bibles, 6,481 New Testaments, 22,369 Portions (a total of 35,268 copies as compared with 31,287 in 1954). Of these, the following were distributed through colportage : 393 Bibles, 594 New Testaments and 10,840 Portions (total 11,827).

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION IN THAILAND

by Ralph Mortensen

General situation

THAILAND has gone out of its way in the past year to welcome visitors from many foreign countries. The World Federation of United Nations Associations held its annual meeting in Bangkok last autumn, and the wife of the Prime Minister of Thailand was elected President of this organisation for the year 1956.

Political tensions in Thailand had subsided sufficiently by last spring to allow the Prime Minister, accompanied by his wife, to make a world tour. Later his chief political rival, the Chief of Police, made an extended trip abroad which included the U.S.A.

Since his return, Premier Pibul Songgram has attempted to put into practice some of the lessons learned on his world tour about democratic governmental procedures : election by the people of local representatives to the 71 regional legislatures ; the establishment of political parties in Thailand (except the Communist Party) ; the "Hyde Park" public forum in Phramane Parade Ground in Bangkok ; and weekly press conferences held by the Prime Minister.

Two extended tours by the King and Queen have meant much to the people of the provinces visited. The last tour to the north-east section is the first that a monarch of the Chakri Dynasty has ever made to that region. The young royal couple dressed in western style and mingled freely with the people, asking questions and giving replies to questions. Both of the areas had outdone themselves in repairing old roads, building new ones, constructing new buildings, especially new railway stations. The royal couple travelled by motor car.

Not only Malaya but also Thailand and other countries have benefited by the upward trend of world prices of rubber, tin, and rice during 1955. With respect to Thailand, 92% of her exports are agricultural products, chief among which are : rice 53½%, rubber 18%, timber 7%. Tin and wolfram

are included in the 8% of non-agricultural products. This year's bountiful rice crop has reversed last year's unfavourable trade balance. During the first nine months of 1955 Thailand exported 982,400 tons compared to 740,300 tons in the corresponding period of 1954.

It is highly significant that a nationally-known Thai economist has recently stated : " . . . . drastic change from an agricultural pattern of economy to an industrial is not at all possible in the foreseeable future".

Benefiting by the increased economic welfare of the people, Buddhist temples, Moslem mosques and Christian churches are being built in many parts of the country. There is a building boom noticeable in the far south, in Bangkok in central Thailand, and even in the less wealthy north-east section of the country.

Religious situation

Since Buddhism is the state religion of Thailand, preparations are already under way to celebrate the 2500th year of the Buddhist era in 1957. It is worth noting that when government officials from Buddhist lands pay official calls, the press gives full coverage of attendance at Buddhist religious services. When the Prime Minister and his wife were on a state visit to Rangoon, repaying an official visit by the Prime Minister of Burma earlier in the year, he took part in an important Buddhist worship service. One effect of this visit timed as it was to come directly after the departure of the two Russian communist leaders, was to divert the attention of Buddhist followers away from the dialectic materialism of Soviet Russia.

A small but steady stream of new Christian missionaries has been flowing into Thailand during the past year. Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries have been welcomed by the Thai government and people. At present the gates are wide open. The numerous hospitals, clinics, leprosy treatment centres, as well as schools introduced to Thailand by the missionary movement have no doubt contributed considerably to this tolerant attitude, and new schools, hospitals, and clinics have been established during the past year in many sections of the country.

Scripture distribution

The bumper rice crop and the higher prices of rice, rubber and tin were a contributing factor in the 10% increase in circulation of Bible Society Scriptures in Thailand in 1955. There were distributed 1,407 Bibles, 2,542 New Testaments and 277,139 Portions, a total of 281,088 Scriptures (an increase of 25,217 over last year's total circulation).

Various methods of distribution are used in Thailand at the present time :

Bookroom evangelism

The following quotations are taken from a report by a missionary in Chantaburi who writes about opening a new bookroom in the market :—

"We have found that we have about 50 or more different persons in each day. About 100 persons pass by on the street every hour on an average. One of the most effective displays we have is a two-sided poster display which

we set out on the sidewalk in front of the bookroom. On one side we put a poster in Thai—on the other side the same poster in Chinese. Scores of folks have stopped to read these who never come inside. We have also tried putting Scripture verses on each side of this display and find it a most effective means of getting the Word before the people. We also use the Scripture story picture rolls regularly. These afford an excellent opportunity for telling the story to any who may be near by. Usually for this a small group—three or four persons—is best. They can ask questions and so can you . . . ."

For attracting folks in from the street the missionary sometimes uses Gospel recordings, phonographs and records.

With respect to results, he comments as follows : "We have been somewhat disappointed in the bookroom on the sales part of the work. It seems that the amount of literature we have been able to sell has been quite small. But this, we feel, is largely because we have not had good Christian salesmen to help us. Several persons have shown us that the bookroom can be a good place to sell books. I believe that such a project as ours could be used, in modified forms, widely throughout this land. The rapidly rising rate of literacy here means that more and more folks are reading—we owe them an adequate opportunity to read what Christian literature is available.

House to house visitation

Missionaries of the Church of Christ in Thailand working in Nakorn Pathom and Bangkok have given us an account of a unique house to house visitation programme organised by a Chinese evangelist from Saigon, South Viet-Nam. He first gained the approval of the Chinese pastors and missionaries operating in the area. Secondly, he challenged the young people of all these various churches to engage in voluntary colportage. Thirdly, preparation meetings were held in the Chinese churches which served as centres out of which the Chinese Christian young people and some interested adults worked. Fourthly, the voluntary colporteurs went out two and two and visited all the homes in the villages and towns of the given area fixed in advance by the organising committee. Gospel portions sold amounted to 10,000, one-fifth of them being Chinese Gospels and four-fifths Thai Gospels. At least one week was spent in certain strategic areas of Bangkok. The whole campaign lasted about three weeks. In each area the churches, the pastors and the congregations have planned a careful follow-up, and it is hoped that the many contacts made will result in many new accessions to the churches.

Boat missions

Three missionary societies are at present engaged in boat evangelism in villages along rivers and canals generally inaccessible by highway or railroad. Thousands of Gospel portions have been distributed by them during the past year. One of these missions is having a launch built capable of housing at least four adults and making it possible for a team to operate on the launch while another team penetrates to nearby villages on bicycles taken along with them on the launch.

Local co-operation

To promote Scripture distribution, an informal conference of local Christian leaders, Thai, Chinese and western, was held in the Bible House,

Bangkok, on 10th October, 1955. Twenty-five out of thirty-six invited guests attended the meeting. The chief church and mission groups operating in Thailand were represented by these twenty-five. From the lively discussion of colportage work, discounts, prices of Scriptures, retail bookstores, promotional aids, etc., that took place, the Secretary of the Thailand Agency received many valuable suggestions.

Another consultation regarding the distribution of Chinese Scriptures in South Thailand took place at the end of the year. There again several useful suggestions were made, such as that Chinese Bible Sunday materials and other promotional material be prepared by Chinese Christians living in South-East Asia, rather than abroad; that the possibility of co-ordinating the Chinese Daily Bible Readings with the daily notes of the Scripture Union be explored; that the Bible Society make more use of radio broadcasts in Chinese, since many shopkeepers have wireless sets and listen in. The need for promotional literature, such as posters, was also stressed and the missionary Bible training courses and institutes were called upon to include some instruction for young people and others not only in how to promote sales, but also in how to challenge people to read the Scriptures.

DEVELOPMENTS IN BIBLE SOCIETY WORK IN MALAYA

by Ian Morrison

WHEN the second world war came to an end in 1945 very little remained of the Bible Society organisation so patiently built up in Malaya during many years prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Mr. Tan, the accountant, with Mr. Daniel of the S.P.C.K., kept the cause alive through the Japanese occupation period in a room at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Singapore. Out of twenty-eight colporteurs in 1941 only three remained in 1945. These three were supplied with free Gospels, the proceeds from which, along with 20% commission on Bibles and New Testaments, made up their income. In this limited way the Bible Society continued to serve the Church and the people through a very difficult time and we must never forget the devotion and sacrifice of those who made this possible.

As soon as Mr. Tipson was released from internment, he began to salvage what he could and by the time the writer arrived in Singapore in June, 1947, a number of colporteurs (seven or eight) were back in full time service, and Scriptures were being offered to people in their homes all over the Peninsula. These facts are given in this introductory section to show that we were not beginning from "scratch" in 1947, when the work in Malaya came under the administration of the National Bible Society of Scotland as a joint agency of the N.B.S.S. and the British and Foreign Bible Society.

During the past eight years efforts have been made to develop the work along several lines. The so-called emergency, which has been with us almost the whole of that time, has affected progress in some respects but not to a serious extent, apart from the partial restriction of colporteurs' movements due to some roads and areas being temporarily unsafe. We may say that there has been development along these lines :—

Circulation of the Scriptures

In the years immediately after the war it was impossible to obtain Scriptures in all the languages used in this area. As the supply position improved the number of languages in which Scriptures were stocked increased, so that we carry over thirty to-day as compared to about half that number in 1948. This has made the colporteurs' task easier, but it has also brought one or two face to face with a personal problem in which they have needed assistance. Malaya is a land of many races and it sometimes happens that a Christian feels a responsibility to communicate the Gospel only to his own community. By going out into villages or the countryside with them it has been possible to show them that men, women and children of all communities are interested and that obedience to the Great Commission is not possible with a communal outlook.

In 1951 nearly three-quarters of a million Chinese, mostly squatters on the jungle fringe, were settled in about six hundred new villages as a measure to help defeat communist terrorists who hid in the jungle and preyed on the squatters for food and shelter. Every effort has been made to take the printed Word to these folks. In many villages this can only be done in the late afternoon or evening as most of the men and many of the women leave the village at dawn to tap rubber, cultivate farms or perform some other kind of employment. Thus, a colporteur can do effective work only in the later hours of the day and it may be unsafe for him to travel after dark. He soon feels a sense of frustration at this waste of time and becomes less and less willing to visit villages other than those within easy reach of the town where he lives. To help in this situation and in other ways we are supplying a number of colporteurs with motor-tricycle "vans", known as trivans, which will take them and a wide variety of Scriptures to the remoter estates and mines where many of the new villagers work. The aim is always to reach the ordinary man wherever he is with the Word of God and we believe the trivans will help to fulfil that aim.

In an average year thirteen colporteurs circulate about half of the Scriptures sent out from the Singapore Bible House. To-day the total circulation is approximately 100,000 compared to 30,000 in 1947.

Other channels through which Scriptures are circulated are five bookshops in Singapore, seven in the Federation of Malaya and Penang, and seven in Sarawak and North Borneo. Of the twelve in Singapore and Malaya, six are church or mission bookshops and the other six general bookshops. Six of the seven in Sarawak and North Borneo are church or mission bookshops ; the other one is the largest commercial bookshop in Kuching, the capital of Sarawak. Along with these there are three churches in Singapore and seven in the Federation of Malaya that have Scriptures displayed for sale in some part of the church. Island dwellers off the coast of Singapore are supplied by Mr. Findlay who carries stocks of Scriptures in his launch on frequent visits to these islands. Pastors, missionaries and lay workers in the churches help in the distribution of the Scriptures.

How much are they used?

It is well to see the Scriptures distributed, but are they used? There is plenty of evidence that a very large proportion of the Scriptures circulated are well read. In recent years the growth in the number of Bible classes and

study groups is phenomenal. One church in Singapore has twenty-two such groups connected with it, meeting two to four times a month. These 'parish meetings' as they are called meet for Bible study and prayer. The rise in the number of people studying the Bible through correspondence courses is no less remarkable and for several years now never fewer than a thousand names have been on the rolls of the various groups who cater for students in this way. In another connection mention has been made of a missionary in North Borneo who handles lessons and corrects papers for four hundred students doing Bible correspondence courses. These are fields into which the Bible Society cannot enter except with encouragement and the supply of Bibles. But there is one method by which it tries to make the Bible more meaningful to the new reader and that is by supplying a well-designed "system of Bible reading" with each volume. Many have spoken of the help derived from such a plan. We can see, then, not only a steady growth in the number of complete Bibles sold during the years (6,700 in 1949 ; 10,700 in 1954) but a great deal of evidence that the Bible is being read and studied with a new enthusiasm and regularity. We cannot but be thankful for these evidences of a new interest in the Book of books.

Growth of local Auxiliaries

Development has also been seen in decentralisation of organisation. In past years everything was organised and controlled from Singapore. More recently, auxiliaries have been set up in Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Taiping and Penang. These auxiliaries are encouraged to undertake the supervision of Scripture distribution through colportage and other means, the organisation of Bible rallies, Bible Sunday services and the ingathering of funds for the Society through collections, and collecting boxes. Very useful work is done by auxiliaries in organising meetings to be addressed by the Secretary when he is travelling. A heartening feature of these auxiliaries for the whole Church is that they bring together in fellowship representatives of different Christian groups who may have no other common ground for sharing in the life of the Spirit. The share of the over-all task being borne by auxiliaries is difficult to state in words and the presence of a group whose members are drawn from most of the churches in a locality keeps the Bible Society and its task before the community in a way that was impossible from Singapore.

Closer co-operation with churches

Development has also been seen in the response of the churches to the Bible Society's claims on their help. One had the impression seven or eight years ago that the Bible Society was viewed as something quite apart from the Church and much time and effort have been devoted to propaganda showing that the Bible Society is an integral part of the Church doing a specialised task for the church. Sound films, exhibitions, literature and addresses have played their part, but special mention should be made of the value of sound films, as made by and for the Bible Societies, in impressing on the churches that they and the Bible Societies are engaged in the same evangelistic task. The response of the churches has been excellent as demonstrated by the growth of their support of the Societies ($1,000 in 1948 ; $10,000 in 1954).

What of the future ? Who can say ? The political structure of the whole area is in flux and changing conditions may require different methods

of work. For the present we must wait watchfully and do our utmost to see that the man and woman, boy and girl, in town, village and kampong will be reached with the "Word of the truth of the Gospel" at all times.

HONG KONG BIBLE HOUSE

by Douglas Lancashire

General situation in Hongkong

THIS is an opportune moment in which to assess the value of the work carried out by Hongkong Bible House since its inauguration some five years ago. It is also an appropriate time to examine the opportunities for future development and expansion. The existence of this agency is due to the Communist upheaval in China, and our close proximity to this new social dynamic is, and must be, an ever-present element in all our thinking and planning. Hongkong has recently been likened to "a fat canary perched on the shoulder of a hungry Tom-Cat". Whether this be true or not, one is constantly being made aware of the tremendous attraction New China has upon the minds of many people, and particularly young people in the Colony and elsewhere. But despite the geographical and political situation of the Colony, there is surprisingly little anxiety evident among the populace. Whenever an incident takes place in the Formosan Straits, or anything concerning the possible future of Chinese territory is discussed, the Chinese newspapers carry banner headlines. These may ruffle the calm waters for a short time, and there may be some speculation over the tea-cups in the cafes and restaurants, but the disturbance rapidly subsides, and the calmness of resignation sets in once again.

Hongkong, however, is not paralyzed by this resignation. On the contrary, with fingers crossed, the merchants put forward every effort to make trade. If the Chinese market is closed, other markets in South-East Asia and South Africa, Canada and England, must be found. If Hongkong cannot maintain her entrepôt business, light industries must be developed. Both cities of Victoria and Kowloon are changing their appearance as fast as builders and architects can pull down old buildings to make way for modern constructions. One of these will be 34 storeys high when completed.

Possibly in no other Colony to-day is there such peace and order, and a will to make the most of every opportunity. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are being housed in multi-storeyed buildings built of concrete. Everything possible is being done to integrate these displaced persons into the local economy.

And yet, despite all this efficiency and will to make the best of a difficult and complicated situation, Hongkong is full of tragedy. In Hongkong one quickly learns just how fragile life can be. The nerve of human existence is laid painfully bare, and the Book of Job is rewritten a thousand times over.

The role of the Bible House

What has been the place and function of Hongkong Bible House in this environment? When publishing commenced some five years ago, the place

of Hongkong Bible House in the Colony was anything but clear. For many years Scripture circulation in Hongkong was in the hands of the Bible Book and Tract Depot. The Depot had acted at one time as the representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and after the war, had been given the right, by China Bible House, to act as sole agent for the Colony. As time went on, and China Bible House progressively lost contact with Hongkong, Hongkong Bible House became the only organisation publishing Chinese Scriptures for the Chinese populations outside China proper. The arrangement with the B.B.T.D. was, however, maintained and very soon, a pattern emerged in which this agency dealt with overseas orders direct, but channelled its books for local distribution through the Depot. This meant that all bookshops and individuals, when ordering Scriptures, went straight to the B.B.T.D. and not to Hongkong Bible House.

With a population which had more than doubled, and with many more religious bodies and missionary groups working in the Colony, the Bible Societies felt that a situation had arisen where some revision of the sole agency agreement was called for. After some discussion with the directors of the B.B.T.D., it was decided that the agreement be terminated, and that Hongkong Bible House be permitted to carry out its own distribution programme in Hongkong. This new agreement came into effect on 1st February, 1955, and it is interesting to note that, during the past year, more whole Bibles and Testaments were distributed in the Hongkong area than in any previous year since the agency was established.

Apart from Formosa, which is part of the Hongkong Agency, it has been common for Hongkong Bible House to serve the Overseas Chinese scattered throughout the nations on the periphery of China, and further afield, through the agencies and Societies in those areas. During the period of its operation, approximately one-and-three-quarter-million volumes of Scriptures have been issued by this Agency.

Pattern for the future

In April, 1955, a Conference of South-East Asia Secretaries was held in Singapore to determine how best to serve the Overseas Chinese scattered throughout the area. As a result of decisions taken there, the future of the work of Hongkong Bible House began to take shape. Thought is being given to the possibility of producing a greater variety of formats so that our publications may appear more attractive. In Hongkong, a retail centre has been opened on one of the busiest streets of the island. It was hoped that a mobile bookshop could also have been brought into use to reach the crowds in the back streets and alleys of our two cities, but unfortunately, the operation of such a unit is against the law of Hongkong.

Up till the present, the distribution of Scriptures in Formosa has been facilitated by two bookshops, the one in Taipei, run by the China Sunday School Association, and the other in Tainan, managed by the English Presbyterian Mission.

As a result of decisions taken in Singapore, the number of colporteurs at work have been increased to four. These men draw their supplies of Scriptures from the two bookshops, and by road and rail endeavour to reach the numerous towns and hamlets of the countryside.

In order to co-ordinate and improve the work of these men, a Formosan pastor (of the Church of Formosa) has been appointed as assistant-secretary for the island. He is to be supplied with a van and audio-visual aids, and will, it is hoped, do much to improve the distribution of the Scriptures, and also to make known the aims and activities of the Bible Societies among local Christians.

One of the greatest problems in Formosa is that the population is not homogeneous. It has always to be borne in mind that the majority of the Formosans (i.e. six to seven millions) received a Japanese education, and would much prefer to read the Scriptures in Japanese, or if they are members of the Church, in Amoyese. Unfortunately the present government is not anxious for large quantities of Japanese literature to enter the country, and in its endeavour to make everyone speak Mandarin (i.e. Kuoyu or the National language), repeatedly states that the Bible must no longer be read in Amoyese. Small quantities of Japanese Bibles and Testaments do trickle through, as also do the Amoy Romanized Scriptures, but there is not the freedom we would like to have to get the Word of God to the people in the languages with which they are most familiar.

Hongkong Bible House is also concerned with revision and translation work. In Hongkong, the Rev. Lu Chen-Chung is engaged on a revision of the Kuoyu or Mandarin Bible. This is not an official project in that the Bible Societies take no responsibility for the text itself, but Mr. Lü is supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society. He has published a revised draft of his New Testament, and is at present engaged on the Old Testament. What the future of Mr. Lü's work will be, is a matter which will have to be considered before long.

In Formosa too, work is being done on the languages of the aboriginal tribes, so many members of which have turned to Christianity since the ending of hostilities. These languages are closely related to those spoken in the Philippines, and therefore come within the Malayo-Polynesian group. Three of these languages have been reduced to writing, and the first Gospels have already come off the press. It is hoped that later in the year (1956) a translators' conference can be held for the benefit of the translators.

Such, then, is a brief picture of the work of Hongkong Bible House. It will be noted that, despite a political situation which is anything but certain, every attempt is being made to move forward ; not to occupy our minds unduly with uncertainties, but to make the most of the opportunities which do exist.

To sum up, Hongkong Bible House has become the publishing house for Chinese Scriptures, sending its publications wherever these are called for. In this direction, it has also undertaken the publishing of quantities of Scriptures in Vietnamese, Laotian, Thai and Mongolian.

Hongkong Bible House is carrying out a distribution programme in the Colony and in Formosa which is expanding, taking on new staff and utilizing new methods of distribution. Hongkong Bible House is also engaged on questions related to Bible translation and revision.

The important thing is to be flexible in policy making. Situations and circumstances change, but with a programme which is adaptable, there is no reason why Hongkong Bible House should not be able to fulfil the Bible Society Charter.

PROSPECTS FOR INDO-CHINA

by H. Curwen-Smith

The general setting

It is frequently stated, and rightly so, that Indo-China is one of the least evangelised and most needy mission fields in the world. Even with the shrunken post-Geneva boundaries, Viet-Nam as a mission field presents a real challenge to the Christian world. Nor can one be satisfied with the inclusion in this statement of Viet-Nam only. Cambodia and Laos are equally needy and, because of their Buddhist background, more resistant to the Christian message. All three countries have, however, proclaimed religious liberty and at least for the present this is indeed no idle statement, but a glad reality.

Not since World War II has the whole of Indo-China been as peaceful as the beginning of 1956 found it. True, there are isolated incidents, especially in North Laos and remote sections of other States, but the general picture is one of calm after great catastrophe.

The real work of reconstruction, resettlement and self-sustainment is, of course, just beginning. Relief organisations and aid programmes have played an important part in the rehabilitation of refugees and others released from communist-controlled territories, but such relief must of necessity be temporary. Eight-hundred-thousand refugees, mostly peasants, cannot readily be absorbed and the government is faced with almost overwhelming problems. The leaders have shown ability and concern, but the basic economic problems are still unsolved. There is need for the establishment of new industries and, above all, for a great reduction in the cost of living. How all this will come about it is hard to foresee, for domestic produce has been caught in an ever-upward spiral and prices for local commodities are far above any of the surrounding countries. If there is to be any competitive trade this will have to change, but in the meantime "improving the standard of living" has come to mean high salaries and astronomical prices.

Position of Protestant Christians

With the political situation until recently so uncertain, it is little wonder that, coupled with the excessive cost of maintaining work, no other Protestant missions have entered on a permanent basis. Only the Christian and Missionary Alliance and the Seventh Day Adventists have kept a staff of missionaries and national workers throughout the years of upheaval. Permission was finally given to the Adventists to open a clinic, which is becoming increasingly popular with the people.

There are, according to the latest statistics of the Vietnamese Evangelical Church, some 34,000 church members ; 189 churches and chapels, 106 of which are churches which have been built by the congregations. There are 212 pastors and evangelists to care for the various congregations, the majority of whom are supported completely by their own people. When one considers the restrictions which for years were placed upon Protestant missionary effort, the storms and stresses of war and the almost unbelievable destruction of property, this is a brave record and one which encourages us to look for greater things in the future.

The picture of the church in Cambodia is not so bright, nor in Laos except among the tribal groups, but here the religious background is different and a break with tradition much more difficult. Nevertheless the interests of all races in Indo-China are broadening and literacy is spreading rapidly—even to the tribal minorities. Now is the time to sow and the small, but vital Christian Church is faced with unprecedented opportunities which must be quickly grasped lest unscrupulous claimants conquer the minds and hearts of the people.

Opportunities for Bible Society work

Colportage work is taking on new life and, given peaceful conditions much can be accomplished. In addition to the work of our full-time colporteurs, many churches send out witnessing bands to outlying districts where they preach and distribute the Scriptures and other Gospel literature. Cambodian Bible School students chose to spend their Christmas vacation distributing Scriptures rather than return to their villages. It was through the efforts of a lowly student-colporteur that the great work among the Laotian tribes began and we trust that the flame may be kindled elsewhere !

Circulation of the leaflet "The Bible Society—What It Is, What It Does", in both Vietnamese and Cambodian (adapted to show what it has done in Indo-China), has stirred new interest in the work. Church leaders show a growing appreciation of the valuable help the Bible Society gives and we have reason to believe this will increase. Last year, in spite of their difficult struggle to achieve full self-support, many Vietnamese churches and practically all Cambodian and Laotian groups, as well as the tribes in Viet-Nam, observed "Bible Sunday" and presented offerings for the work of spreading the Word.

We have high hopes for the future. Improved roads with better transportation facilities, audio-visual and other aids will, we believe, play an important part in our programme. Above all, those who spread the Word must do so with a deep conviction that the "Christ of the Bible" is the only answer to all moral and spiritual problems in this and other lands.

The following notes are extracts from the annual report of the Indo-China Agency for 1955 :—

The States—or perhaps we should say "countries"—of Cambodia, Laos and Free Viet-Nam are now entirely autonomous. Currency is no longer interchangeable and a special travel permit must be obtained to cross the borders of each land, but once inside the country there is perfect freedom of circulation and one can now travel safely without convoy. All this has been a boon to Christian workers, who are taking full advantage of the unprecedented freedom to preach the Gospel and during the past a number of new churches have been founded, three of them in the Saigon area.

Unlike many places, none of the prisons of this land have ever had regular chaplain service. Fortunately, the present leaders recognise the importance of religious instruction and have given permission to hold weekly services in one of the largest prisons, which is crowded with people from every walk of life. Several hundred are now participating in a Bible Correspondence Course which has been prepared.

At a recent International Exhibition in Phnom Penh, the Bible Society shared a booth with the Christian & Missionary Alliance mission. A conservative estimate of one hundred thousand people from all over the country were contacted, many being introduced to Christianity for the first time. A public address system was used frequently, as well as films and coloured slides, while Cambodian, Chinese, Vietnamese workers and missionaries took turns inviting the people to explore the treasures of the Book of Books. Leaflets in four languages explained the work and purpose of the Society and a goodly number of Bibles, Testament and Gospel portions were sold. We felt it was a most worthwhile venture which will give new impetus to the struggling church in Cambodia.

The Cambodian Bible, which first came out in 1954, continues to be held in high esteem by many of that country's highest officials. They consider it as the finest piece of Cambodian literature they have seen. Our earnest desire is that this Book may not be merely the object of admiration, but that it may be a guide to those in authority as well as to the masses.

OPPORTUNITIES OPENING UP IN THE PHILIPPINES

by W. H. Fonger

Historical background

THE history of the work in the Philippines seems to divide itself into three periods. It began in 1899 and the first period ended in 1923. During that time many beginnings were made. The big task was translation. The printing at the end of that period was being done in Japan as it was much less expensive to do it there than in the Philippines. But in July of 1923, one of the worst earthquakes in the history of that country occurred and the stocks, plates and everything we had there were destroyed.

The second period began in 1923. Because it was necessary to make new plates and begin over again, it was decided that some revisions should be made. It was also decided to have plates made in Manila and do the printing here. So for those next years the great emphasis was on revision and the making of new plates.

As the new additions came off the press, there was real demand. The Christian workers, pastors, Bible women and missionaries did their share and colporteurs were put in the field. For part of that period there were two Bible vans in use with audio-visual equipment which were much used in evangelistic work and in going into new areas. Then came World War II and ended our second period.

When the battle of Manila ended in 1945 and the third period began, there was little left of Bible House. The buildings were almost completely destroyed. Only the concrete vault in which the electro and stereotype plates were stored was left. But with 80% of the plates still intact in the vault, we were much better off than following the Tokyo earthquake in 1923. The plates were sent to the United States for printing as no facilities were available here. Work started at once and within a comparatively short time, Scriptures in the Philippine languages were again available.

New openings following World War II

The demand was almost unbelievable. There had been no distribution for more than three years of occupation and at least one year following. A very large percentage of families had been forced to leave their homes for some time during those years. In many areas the homes with all contents were completely destroyed. Bibles became very scarce indeed and the demand was greater than the supply.

Within two years, missionaries began to return and work was re-opened, and new work was started by new mission and church groups, and schools sprang up everywhere under the direction of church members. Mission stations, churches, hospitals and schools began ordering Scriptures in the Philippine languages and in English. Transportation improved rapidly and soon Bibles were being supplied to all parts of the Philippines. They were being sent out on demand. People rode buses for many miles to come to Bible House to buy and carry back supplies for the whole church.

With that demand no colporteurs were used. Christian workers have continued to order and supply the needs of most areas. So since the war we have not had any salesmen in the Philippines. We now have some 700 people on our list who are ordering for resale. The orders go out by mail, bus, train, boat and even a few by plane in addition to the scores which are carried away by the people who come to our Manila salesroom.

We are very pleased to report that distribution has constantly increased. Pre-war the total whole Bible sales had reached as high as 10,000 copies in only one year. Since that time Bible sales have more than doubled. We are now averaging more than 25,000 whole Bibles per year. New Testaments and portions have not increased in the same proportion as Bibles, but this past year we have had the largest total volume of sales in our history.

In this matter of "no colporteurs" we seem to stand almost alone among similar agencies. The primary reasons why we have not had them are : first, the strong demand without salesmen ; and secondly, the very high cost of colportage here at this time.

There has been, we feel, a very real advantage to our present system and that is the very close co-operation we have with the churches. With no colporteurs the churches and the church people have come to feel their responsibility. We do not say we should continue entirely on the present basis, but we do feel very sure that the church in the Philippines has a real interest in distribution. Our Agency is not only welcome at conferences and conventions, but is urged to send its representatives and also to report to such groups as to what the Agency is doing. We are always given a very liberal portion of time on such programmes. Also we feel that the large proportion of whole Bibles used as compared to New Testaments and Portions, indicates the interest of the church and that it is definitely a Bible-reading church.

Methods of distribution

Many new distribution opportunities are opening constantly. The Far East Broadcasting Co., located just outside Manila, is one of the strongest radio stations in the Far East. It is a religious station engaged entirely in

teaching the Bible and preaching the Gospel through most of every day. Thousands of people here are studying the courses offered by that station. Other groups also are paying for time on commercial stations and offering courses. Also several of the church groups are putting out correspondence courses and other thousands are studying these. To do so, Gospel portions, New Testaments and Bibles of course, are necessary.

A number of large city churches have placed tables at the church door, offering Scriptures to all who come. One such has successfully operated a "Serve yourself table" for nearly two years now, where people take the Scripture desired and drop the payment in a slot in the top of the table. In another such church, one of the members voluntarily visited every Sunday School class over several Sundays and took orders resulting in unexpectedly large sales. The same man then went before the church council and got more than twenty of its members to buy 100 Gospel portions each to use to present to guests coming into their homes and in their own visitations. An increasing number of churches, hospitals and schools are placing Bible showcases in convenient places. These are only a few instances of what is being done to increase distribution and get the Bible into the hands of those who need it.

We realise, however, the need for colporteurs. The system suggested above cares for the needs of those reached by the churches in a fairly adequate way; but we are not unaware of the great groups of people who have no contact with the church and we have definite plans laid to put several colporteurs in the field. In the whole programme of National Betterment in the Philippines, the rural areas are getting special attention. New lands are being opened up with new roads, and farmers are flocking into such areas. The churches and missions are not able to enter such places at once, and our colporteurs are needed to provide these new villages with the Scriptures that the churches later may find fields ready for the harvest.

Opportunities among illiterates

Another area opening up for us is the rather large number of new literates. The Philippine government has a fairly effective programme in operation in some areas and many of the mission and church groups are putting forth real effort in that field. Much of this is being done among the more backward people, many of whom actually have no written language of their own at present. Much is now being done to reduce these languages to writing and we are working at the task of getting Gospel portions translated and put into print for these new readers. That offers us the opportunity of getting the Gospel to thousands of these folk who to date have had no word of it in their own tongue.

Truly many doors are open to the Gospel. We pray that we may be able to enter those doors with the kind of material that will accomplish the most.

The following additional notes are taken from the annual report for 1954-1955 *of the Philippines Agency :—*

Religious trends have not greatly changed. The Roman Catholic Church still continues its struggle for control, particularly in relation to the educational system. This year the fight has been on the question of religious instruction

in the public schools. A new order has been issued which practically makes such instruction compulsory and even makes it possible for teachers to give grades in religious subjects which affect the final grades in graduation. However, all non-Roman Catholic work in the islands seems to be growing rapidly. The number of missionaries from abroad continues to increase, and we now have about 25 Bible Training Schools and Seminaries turning out scores of new workers each year. These new workers are going to all parts of the islands and much new work is being opened up in the more remote areas.

One of the very significant religious movements in the Philippines to-day is the Philippine Independent Church. This church was formed at the turn of the century when the hold of Spain and the Spanish church authority was broken. A very large group, said at the time to number approximately two million, broke from the Roman church. For several years it grew, and then owing to the decision of the courts giving all property to the so-called mother church, the new organisation ran into many difficulties . . . .

For many years there was little progress and perhaps some ground was lost through neglect and indifference. But since the last war this church has been under new leadership and has definitely taken on new life. The present supreme Bishop of that church is a man of wide experience and a real spiritual leader. He and his church are very co-operative and vitally interested in all movements leading toward a deepening of the spiritual life of the nation. They are making increasing use of the Bible in their worship services and in the training of their church membership. The supreme Bishop has been a member of the Advisory Council of our Philippine Bible House from its beginning and most regular and helpful in all meetings. With one million and a half members, this church is fast becoming one of the real spiritual forces of the Philippines. . . . .

Our Advisory Council is rapidly growing in importance and usefulness. Early this year the Council was organised into several committees and commissioned with the several phases of our work as Publication, Distribution, Finance and Support, etc. Meetings have been held and these committees are sharing in a fine way their various responsibilities . . . .

The annual all-day meeting of the Council and the Philippine Branch of the Bible Society is taking on new importance. The members not only approve but initiate plans and policies which work for the enlarged programme of the Agency. Both organisations are becoming increasingly representative and we hope soon to have all non-Roman Catholic groups working together for the greater use of God's Word in this country. Also these two organisations are more and more responsible for the constantly increasing local support. Several of the Council members have spent much time this past year in writing letters and visiting churches, urging support of the work of the Agency. The number of churches observing Bible Sunday has increased and the almost 5,000 pesos received is a new high in local giving.

We are very pleased to announce an important addition to our staff. Beginning with January 1st, 1956, the Rev. Angel B. Taglucop will join us at Bible House as Associate Secretary. We have been contemplating this move for the last several years and now it is about to be realised.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN BORNEO AND SARAWAK

by Ian Morrison

The following extracts are taken from Mr. Morrison's report of a tour he made to these two islands in July and August, 1955, beginning at Lawas in Borneo.

LAWAS is a small town of only a few hundred inhabitants, Malays, Muruts and about 300 Chinese. A little farther up the Lawas river is the main station and headquarters of the Borneo Evangelical Mission. Residences, Bible School, Dormitories, the Church and various other buildings are grouped round the landing strip with the school farm a short distance away. Unlike many societies, the Borneo Evangelical Mission has its headquarters on the field, and all its activity is planned and guided from Lawas. Very soon after arrival, one becomes aware that the chief concern of almost everyone lies along three lines :—

Translation of the Scriptures

This is regarded as the most important contribution any missionary can make. Most of the missionaries have been trained in the Wycliffe School of Linguistics Techniques and although they are dealing with very difficult languages, good progress is being made. Hitherto, most of the work of the mission in Sarawak has been among the Murut tribe and nine books of the New Testament are translated into their language. A satisfying feature of all the work done by this group is that all translations are tested out in mimeographed form for two years among the people before the Bible Society is approached about publication.

Training of Local Ministry

The Bible School provides a four-year course and it is significant that there are twice as many fully trained natives as missionaries in the field. This, in turn, may be accounted for, in part, by the fact that the whole Murut tribe in Sarawak has become Christian in less than a generation.

Evangelism

Nowhere have I seen such zeal for evangelism. The Murut Church is sending missionaries to other tribes at its own charges. No foreign funds are used on such enterprises, as none are used to pay pastors or evangelists called by the church. Five couples—with their children—who finish the Bible School course this year are going as missionaries to the Dusun in North Borneo. They must learn one of the most difficult—if not the most difficult – of all the languages used in British Borneo. There is something heroic and majestic about these conservative people of the hills going forth at the call of Christ to a people whose language and customs are very different from their own. A feature of all their preaching, whether it be proclamation of the Gospel or teaching Scripture doctrine is that the facts as stated in the Word of God are presented in an almost formal manner. Much prayer precedes and follows all preaching. "High pressure" evangelism as practised in the west is quite

unknown to them. There is an audacious faith in the Holy Spirit's readiness to use the preached (or read) word to the blessing of souls—and it works. It is difficult to describe the impression made upon the mind by the Muruts and their eagerness to evangelise. It is like a hunger that must be satisfied with many of them. When it is remembered that there was scarcely a Christian among them a generation ago and that to-day their own tribe is almost 100% Christian and that they are reaching out among half-a-dozen other tribes with the Gospel, some measure of the thoroughness with which they have grasped the essentially missionary aspect of the Christian religion may be gained.

The Sunday service was memorable. As in most other places visited, the congregation sits on the floor with legs tucked in close—a most painful form of torture to one not used to it when endured for the best part of an hour. After roll call the congregation rises and leaves the church for a "leg-stretch" which takes the form of a walk some little distance from the church and then forming an orderly file and marching back into church. This is a pretty sight as most people are dressed in gay coloured clothes. During the service I was presented with a small cloth bag containing the first offering from the Murut Church to the Bible Society. It contained over £1 sterling, mostly in small coins. When it is remembered that most of the offering is given in kind this represents the givings in cash over a period.

We walked about five hours to reach Long Luping—surely one of the loveliest villages in Borneo. Situated on a promontory formed by the confluence of the Trusan and Luping rivers it is spotlessly clean and radiates a spirit of peace and harmony. Here, many of the people have their own small houses, raised on stilts, where they are free from the hubbub of longhouse life and where they are better able to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord". Pigs and buffalo are shut out from the immediate vicinity of the homes so that the area under each house is spotlessly clean, providing healthy shade and shelter for children at play. Even the sanitary arrangements, though lacking porcelain refinements, are superior to those in many country areas in Britain. Twenty-five years ago there were no Christians in Long Luping. To-day, the community of about 120 is all Christian. Already this small community has provided 17 full-time Christian workers for the church—they are now scattered, after training, through the whole field. Also, Long Luping supports its own pastor without any help from outside. This is made possible by every Christian tithing his income and his crops. Some other communities as well support their pastor for it is mission policy that if a community wants a pastor it must support him. How well the people have caught the Christian spirit is illustrated by this story. Six or seven years ago a group of Kelabits on the way to the coast was spending the night at Long Luping. One of them ran amok and was not overpowered until he had killed several of the villagers. Naturally enough, the people of Long Luping were suspicious of Kelabits after that and Kelabits went to the coast by another route. The fear of each other was broken down by a young man from Long Luping going to be a pastor among the Kelabits. The head man from Long Luping walked seven days to the convention on the plateau and had happy fellowship with Kelabit Christians there.

The trip was well worth while, particularly from a personal point of view in that I now have some first-hand knowledge of matters that could be nothing other than vague from a distance.

(1) There is the urgent need of publishing the Scriptures as soon as possible in the languages of the tribes that have become Christian. If the church among these people is to be consolidated, strengthened and made permanent they must have the Bible in their own languages. If the evangelical zeal already there and reaching out to other tribes is to be maintained they must have the Word of God in their own hands and in their own speech. History sounds a warning and a challenge concerning these things and we do well to give heed to both.

(2) If it should be argued that Scriptures in the trade language (Malay) could be used among the tribes, the answer is that most of them do not know it : they live so far from the coast that they do not hear it, and there is no likelihood of its becoming 'lingua franca' of the interior for many years to come. This can be appreciated when we realise that large numbers of the tribes-people live from 5 to 14 days' walk from the coast, and that, traditionally they have rather looked down on the Malays and their culture.

(3) Colportage among the Ibans : I had hoped that the time might have come to help in the evangelisation of the Ibans through colportage but literacy is still so low among them that apparently the effort would not be fruitful. Methodist, S.P.G. and other schools are remedying this situation but far too few pupils return to help their own people, preferring to remain in the large towns in government or other employment.

BIBLE SOCIETY SERVICE FOR OVERSEAS CHINESE

by Ralph Mortensen

The problem

Why did the Bible Societies start a special service for the 20,000,000 *Chinese living outside the China mainland?*

THE Chinese constitute about one fifth of the human race, the bulk of them residing in continental China. Anyone interested in the conversion of mankind to the Christian way of life cannot ignore them. Undaunted by the apparent failure of the early Nestorians, many attempts have since been made by Catholic and Protestant missions. The lowering of the Bamboo Curtain by the Chinese communists in 1949 after they had gained control of the whole China mainland, signalled the end of a whole missionary era. Persecution of Christianity and Christians, national and foreign, took on subtle forms. The net result is that all of the thousands of Christian missionaries had to leave China, only a handful remaining in prison or under house arrest.

Fortunately two of the Bible Societies operating in China, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, had as early as 1937 sponsored the organisation of the China Bible House with constitution and a Board of Directors, the National Bible Society of Scotland becoming a constituent member in 1946. In December, 1950, the first full-time Chinese General Secretary took over from the foreign General Secretary, and the all-Chinese Board of Directors assumed responsibility for Bible Society work in China and custodianship of the properties in China of the B.F.B.S., the

A.B.S. and the N.B.S.S. The China Bible House, since registering with the governmental authorities in Shanghai in 1951, has called itself the China Bible Society, although in Chinese no change was made. The headquarters of the China Bible Society and its eleven provincial sub-agencies were reported still functioning in a letter to me dated December 3rd, 1955, from a foreigner residing in Shanghai.

Since the communist government has forbidden the Christian organisations in China to have any contacts with western organisations, the China Bible Society has not been able to effect the return to Shanghai of any of the foreign secretaries, nor to make use of foreign funds. Importation and exportation of Scriptures in and out of Shanghai has become extremely difficult.

What are the Bible Societies doing about the problem?

Reviewing this situation the Bible Societies formerly co-operating in China began in 1950 to expand their work in Hongkong and Formosa. The publication in Hongkong of Chinese Scriptures to meet local needs and those of Overseas Chinese has steadily increased in volume, Hongkong having excellent printing facilities at the lowest rates prevailing in South-East Asia.

How many Chinese reside outside the China mainland in East and South-East Asia? Conservative estimates follow :

Taiwan (Formosa)	8,000,000
Hongkong	2,500,000
Indo-China	1,200,000
Thailand...	3,600,000
Philippines	150,000
Malaya-Singapore	3,000,000
Indonesia	1,600,000
Burma	300,000
Total Ethnic Chinese ...	20,350,000

Since Christian missionaries have been excluded from missionary activities in the China mainland, the 20,000,000 Chinese living outside offered a suitable missionary field. Hundreds of former China missionaries have been pouring into the sparsely occupied field of South-East Asia since 1950, seeking wherever possible to contact the Chinese. In most of the countries listed above, the Chinese have gained control of the business and the economic life of the people, which has resulted in not a little tension and has caused resentment among the non-Chinese peoples. Practically all of these Chinese had family and business ties in Communist China. If and when the present Bamboo Curtain is lifted, these Overseas Chinese will no doubt once more have closer and more intimate contacts with their relatives and friends on the China mainland.

What are the Christian churches doing about the conversion of these 20,000,000 Chinese? The task is difficult, and often missionaries are tempted to work among other races and tribes where the picking is easier. In Thailand only a dozen former China missionaries are working full-time among the 3,600,000 Chinese. If a good percentage of these Overseas Chinese could be won for the Christian cause now, they would be able to take the Christian witness back to China, and thus, in God's providence, they would undoubtedly

be of strategic importance in the conversion to Christianity of the Chinese race. Thoughts along these lines motivated the B.F.B.S., the A.B.S. and the N.B.S.S., when they decided in the summer of 1954 to call a travelling advisory secretary to Bible Society service for Overseas Chinese.

At the outset the purpose of this new office was clearly defined by the supporting Bible Societies : "To make available to the area secretaries of East and South-East Asia the services of a man with China experience for the development of a programme of increased Scripture distribution among the Chinese resident in the region ; and to keep headquarters of the supporting societies informed of the developments in the area and on the mainland".

At the first conference of area and home secretaries held in Singapore from March 28th-April 2nd, 1955, a cursory survey of the work among Chinese in South-East Asia was made, and certain aims and goals were set. The main recommendations to the home supporting societies were :

(1) The appointment of highly qualified Chinese as Associate Secretaries in Singapore-Malaya, Hongkong-Taiwan, Indo-China, in order to assure closer co-operation of the Chinese churches with the Bible Society, and more effective distribution of Scriptures among Chinese.

(2) The purchase of more efficient and modern equipment to promote wider circulation of Scriptures among Overseas Chinese :

(*a*) Motor vans with audio-visual aids
(*b*) Motor tricycles
(*c*) Motor launches with audio-visual aids

Appointment of personnel to handle this equipment : driver-mechanics and salesmen capable of operating audio-visual machines.

(3) Stock-piling of Chinese Scriptures sufficient to meet any emergency that might arise in the Far East.

(4) Closer contact with Chinese Christian churches and missions working among Chinese through Advisory Committees, with Chinese and western personnel, assisting the regional secretaries.

(5) Inauguration of uniform prices of missionary editions of Chinese Scriptures throughout South-East Asia.

(6) Concerted effort of all regional secretaries to increase voluntary colportage among all groups of Chinese through the Chinese Christian churches.

(7) The publication of a quarterly Bible Society bulletin in Chinese (or, possibly, in a bilingual form, Chinese-English) to foster a greater understanding of the programme of the Bible Societies and their methods and techniques.

(8) The production of a new sound film depicting life in the newly-established Chinese villages in Malaya and how the Bible Society pioneered among them.

(9) The establishment of a research department to which the following and related questions can be referred :

(*a*) The recruitment and training of a corps of a new type of highly-trained colporteurs for work among the Chinese of South-East Asia ;

(*b*) The revision, publication, or discontinuation of publication of the various editions and versions of the Scriptures used by Chinese, (e.g. Cantonese, Hakka, Amoy, Swatow, etc.).

THE BIBLE FOR ILLITERATES

by Hans R. Weber

"O YES, I should very much like to attend that Bible course, but I am illiterate". Such was the stereotype answer when I travelled through the villages of the Banggai-archipelago to prepare and hold Bible courses for the Christian Church in Central Celebes.

Should we pass on and merely gather those who happen to know how to read? Should we translate, print and distribute the Bible just for them? If we do so we leave behind us more than half of our brethren all over the world, because there are still over 50% illiterates and a great percentage of semi-literates for whom a meaningful Bible-reading remains almost impossible.

The rediscovery of the Bible in all the Christian churches has taught us that no Christian faith and life is possible unless we are constantly fed by the biblical message. Bible and evangelism, Bible and the growth into the fulness of Christ belong together. No Church without the Bible!

As we are sent to all mankind, including the illiterates and semi-illiterates, we are faced with some very urgent and disturbing questions: *How to communicate the biblical message to illiterates*? *How to make real Bible study with them*?

Nobody can pretend to know the answer to these questions, although some promising experiments are being made in this field, especially in India. One cannot even say that the western churches are aware of the problem. Of course many missionaries struggle with it, but till now no substantial study has been made on this major theme. The whole literature around the "Rediscovery of the Bible" does not even mention the question, and if one reads some publications of the Bible Societies one has the impression that our task would be fulfilled if only the whole Bible were translated and printed in all languages and distributed among all people—forgetting that over half of our brethren, whom the Indonesians call "buta huruf"—the "blind with regard to letters".

Consciously or unconsciously most of us tend to the questionable presupposition that one has to be a literate to be a Christian. Dr. Frank Laubach, the great apostle and friend of the illiterates, never says so. But his crusade for literacy is based on this presupposition. Laubach's crusade is a genuine and most important part of the Church's diaconate. It is a mighty expression of Christian love for those who, because of their illiteracy, become "the least of our brethren" in our modern world. But is this crusade the only and the best way of evangelisation among illiterates? Must illiterates first become literates to be fed by the "bread of life" and the "living water"? Is the Laubach approach to evangelism and the building up of the Church not a typically western one?

There is another crusade to be mentioned in this connection: the whole movement for audio-visual aids in the teaching and witness of the Church. Here the problem of illiteracy is faced and a pamphlet of RAVEMCCO (Radio, Visual Education and Mass Communication Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.),

calls us to action following quite new lines : "Two thousand years ago Jesus enjoined His followers to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Although the Church has been planted in every land, countless millions are still unreached. But to-day they can be reached if we enlist the media of mass communication in the service of Christ. Physical need calls for programmes of public health, home and family life and rural reconstruction. Intellectual need calls for the ability to read and to learn from the printed page. RAVEMCCO co-operates with these and all other phases of the Christian mission. But for the millions who need help *now* it exists to provide more effective media for evangelism and education, in order that the mind and heart of man may be reached for Christ—even before the needs of his body have been met or he has become literate".

If one reads the documents published so far by the Audio-Visual Aid Movement, one cannot escape the feeling that here the whole problem is reduced to a technical one. Illiterates, it is stated, cannot use the technique of reading. Therefore we have to find other means of communication to transmit the biblical message. Modern science has given us such means, namely the mass-media. The whole problem then consists only in the production and distribution of the audio-visual mass-media, in the adaptation of these media to local needs and in the training of experts to use the media. This may be an unfair over-simplification, but the fact remains that among those who struggle in the crusade for audio-visual aids there is only a very dim awareness of the deep and complex problems involved in every real communication and very especially in the communication of the biblical message.

The Bible for illiterates ! This demand leads us right into the heart of the present discussion and study on communication. Sometimes I wonder what would happen if we could replace our professors, bishops, preachers, teachers and secretaries by some leading illiterates of the Banggai-archipelago and if we gave them complete freedom to arrange things in their way and to use their means of communication.

In many respects it would be a healthy revolution. For in a sense illiterates are far more fully and harmoniously developed persons than western intellectuals. When I lived among the "blind with regard to letters" I began to realise that not they but I was the blind man. I am the cripple who is bound to just one way of communication through abstract terms. However, they are free to communicate through lively and concrete words in their dialogues, through images and symbols, through drama and dance.

This again is over-simplification, but it shows us the way for bringing the Bible to illiterates : we have to learn to use their ways of communication. This is not just a new technique because it involves a real encounter in which we both give and receive. In communicating the Bible to illiterates we will re-discover the manifold biblical ways of communication : we will hear in a new way all the words which give witness to the word of God ; we will begin to see many biblical images which lead us to the image of God ; we will notice many biblical symbols and tokens around the Great Token which was erected at the turning-point of world history ; we will join in the all-decisive dialogue between God and man and see our role in the greatest drama ever played.*

*The author of this article has developed and illustrated his thesis in a study on the communication of the Gospel, based on his experiences made in the missionary approach to illiterates. This study will soon be published by the S.C.M. Press as a handy pamphlet of the International Missionary Council.

THE BIBLE SOCIETIES AND WORLD EVANGELISATION

by James Innes

being a study in a new approach to the most effective way of using the Scriptures in world evangelisation.

IN the nature of the case, as the different parts of the New Testament came into being they were used separately and in different places from very early times in the history of the Church. Even after the New Testament had been completed, it is evident down through the history of the Church that a degree of selectivity has been used in presenting the different parts of the New Testament for particular purposes. This is also true to-day as we publish the New Testament separately, and, indeed, we publish and distribute the separate books of the Bible, such as the Psalms and the Gospels.

In common with most of my colleagues in the Bible Societies, I have been seeking for many years for a Scripture medium which would more fully meet the need for the purposes of evangelisation, than say, a single Gospel. The day is rapidly passing when in evangelisation, people accept an unreflective presentation of the Gospel. A single Gospel, it would seem, is not sufficiently complete to give an adequate understanding of the Gospel message and of the divinely appointed mission with the bringing into being of the Church.

In saying this, allow me immediately to counter the objection which will be raised by the more conservative members of our fraternity. It is understood that the desired end is that all men should have a complete Bible in their own language and where that is not possible for various reasons, the complete New Testament.

It would seem that a more suitable Scripture medium for the purpose of evangelisation and the indoctrination of converts in the early stages, at least, would be a little volume comprising Luke, Acts and Romans. This small volume would seem to be sufficiently complete in itself as a first introduction to the New Testament and the Bible as a whole. The reasons behind the choice of these three particular books, simply on the human level, of course, are that Luke wrote the Gospel which bears his name and the Acts, while Paul wrote Romans and it would seem that Luke's presentation of the Gospel narrative and his interpretation of Christian doctrine is Pauline in its intent. Luke's Gospel, moreover, would seem to be the most complete of the four Gospels in many ways, as it sets out to give as complete a picture of the facts of our Lord's Antecedents, Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension. Acts, of course, follows on from the Gospel narrative and can readily be related both to the Gospel and to the Epistle to the Romans. I have suggested Romans as it would seem to be the most complete of Paul's Epistles and is particularly suitable, as it explains the relationship of the Hebrew people, from whom our Lord came in the flesh, and their witness to mankind at large. It also contains practically all of the cardinal doctrines of the Faith in regard to Original Sin, Salvation and Justification. It can readily be seen that no selection of books taken from the Petrine or Johannine strains in the New Testament would suit the purposes which we have in mind, so well.

The objection may be raised that the Greek which Luke used in his Gospel is more difficult to translate than say the Greek usages in Mark's Gospel, but any adequate attempt to translate even a part of the New Testament into another tongue would have to include the Acts, also compiled by Luke, so that that objection can be over-ruled. Much more, of course, can be said on the subject but suffice it to mention but a few of the most important points. Perhaps the most important is the effect such a small volume, comprising these three books, would have on the person whom we are seeking to evangelise. From his point of view, the sequence of the three books is logically and chronologically understandable. There is no confusing duplication of narratives and events such as we find in the way the New Testament is bound to-day. Then, from the translator's point of view, great advantages can surely be seen in advocating this trilogy of books as a preliminary to doing the complete New Testament. For economic reasons, it should be possible to produce many more copies of this little volume containing only three books than the complete New Testament, particularly in areas where a medium is required for large scale distribution and mass evangelisation. These are but a few of the advantages. Paper limitations are one of the severe restrictions to the progress of our work and my suggestion would have a favourable bearing in this regard also. Above all, this small volume would serve as a first introduction to the story of Christ and His Church, which is the immediate purpose of evangelisation.

This study could have far-reaching results in the policies of the Bible Societies and the missionary societies, and is offered prayerfully and as a further Bible Society contribution to the bringing in of the Kingdom of God by the Word of God.

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Africa (East)

Reviewing the situation of Bible Society work in East Africa the Rev. Frank Bedford in his last report stresses, among others, the following points : First, there is the challenge of the large towns into which, especially since the war, people of all races have poured in ever-creasing numbers. In the area of Nairobi alone over 100,000 Africans have settled down, coming from most parts of Kenya. Housing and other physical amenities are far from adequate. But "it is on the spiritual side", writes Mr. Bedford, "that we have our greatest misgivings. We are convinced that the provision of the Scriptures and the wide and careful distribution of the Word of God can do a great deal to build up a Christian community, in Nairobi and in the other towns of East Africa . . . . This work presents a challenge to the Bible Society to ensure that there is a steady supply of Scriptures which can be available to Christian workers in these pioneer urban tasks. We shall have to consider the best means of distribution in the towns by the use of mobile units and the establishment of small Bible kiosks in every community centre".

Secondly, the challenge of the rapidly-growing Asian population, nearly 300,000 people now, scattered all over East Africa and almost untouched by Christian evangelism. "The task is a very difficult one, and apart from a few comparatively small efforts in Nairobi and Kampala, the Christian Church has made no living

impact on the Asian folk .... One of the main tasks we shall have to organise when our Bible House in Nairobi is complete, is colportage to the Indian people on a growing scale."

Thirdly, the challenge of "the great social revolution which has taken place in Kikuyuland through the establishment of the new village settlements .... The tremendous fact is now reported that over a million Kikuyu people (previously scattered in isolated farms) have now been moved into these new settlements .... We hope that as soon as we can get the new mobile unit into the field, one of the first visits will be to these needy areas. Our plans for the provision of Scriptures in these places depend upon the provision of a more adequate staff for the Bible Society in East Africa".

Fourthly, the Rev. F. Bedford refers to the steady increase of local interest and support for Bible Society work. (Recently the Nairobi East Auxiliary, an all-African committee, organised a rally which brought together more than 1,300 people.) Collections have exceeded £1,600 : "When one considers the low economic level of the wages of so many of the African people in our territories, this is a record of which we can be proud". The churches are also increasing their participation in Scripture circulation. "Towards the end of 1955 we ordered from Bible Society headquarters 498,000 Gospels in 25 different languages, and these are to be distributed on *missionary terms*.* The response to this scheme from all over East Africa has been almost overwhelming and the above close on half-a-million Scriptures have already been ordered .... With the growth of literacy movements in East Africa, there should be many opportunities in the future of providing such special Scriptures". Mr. Bedford remarks : "We have reached a new stage in the life of the Church and it may well be that the next big advance of Christianity in East Africa will depend upon a concerted drive on the part of the Church to spread the Word of God in printed form".

*See BULLETIN No. 24, p. 3 and onwards.

Basutoland

On 31st January last, in every parish of the Church in Basutoland, a special service was held to commemorate the centenary of the printing of the first New Testament in Suto.

The first three missionaries to the Basuto people arrived in June, 1833 and they began at once to study the Suto language, at first with the help of the local chief. By 1838, two of them (Casalis and Rolland) had translated the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John into that language, the B.F.B.S. partly subsidising the printing. Work continued on the New Testament over a period of years, but owing to many and varied difficulties, it was not until 1856 that the first sheets of the complete New Testament were ready for binding, and it was 1861 before the first copies were actually bound. Supplies were at first insufficient to meet the demand and a new edition had to be printed in France in 1868, again through the good offices of the B.F.B.S.

Thus the translation of the New Testament into Suto had taken twenty-two years of faithful toil. The work of a further dozen missionaries, over a period of 27 years, was necessary before the whole Bible was given to the Basuto in their own tongue.

Congo

As a result of the new B.F.B.S. policy of supplying Gospels on "missionary terms", orders for more than 100,000 Gospels have been received by Mr. A. W. Marthinson, the B.F.

B.S. agent for the Congo. It is estimated that a quarter-of-a-million Gospels will be needed in 1956 to cover the demand.

The first Pocket Testaments are also soon to appear in that part of Central Africa. Publication in the first instance will be in the Kikongo and Lingala languages.

Egypt

The Alexandria Auxiliary of the B.F.B.S. Agency in Egypt organised a Bible exhibition last March, lasting a week.

The Rt. Rev. T. F. Johnston, Anglican Bishop in Egypt, chaired the opening ceremony which was attended by the Governor of Alexandria, as Guest of Honour. During the ceremony readings of the Scriptures were given in six languages. Various meetings were held during the week which were addressed by Bible Society agents from various Bible Land countries, Greece, Jordan and Lebanon.

England

A branch of the "Freundes Dienst" (see BULLETIN No. 25, p.14 onwards), which is engaged in a widespread distribution of coupons offering free copies of Gospels, has now been set up in Britain (at "Lytham", Whitby Road, Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire). The English title of the organisation is "The Service of Friendship" and the secretary working from that address is Mr. R. G. Davis.

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It has been customary for a number of years now at the *British and Foreign Bible Society* headquarters in London, to invite the entire staff of the House to meet the General Committee at its first meeting of the year. The speaker this year was Mr. Martin Parr, a member of the Committee and a former provincial governor in the Sudan, under British administration. His address was a challenge to the Society to take more seriously its responsibilities at home. The situation had, Mr. Parr said, changed fundamentally since the nineteenth century. Then the Society's task was to provide Bibles at a price people could afford, knowing that they understood what the Bible was and respected it. To-day seventy-five per cent. of the population of these islands knew nothing about the Bible and were so "sunk in scientific materialism" that they regarded it as antiquated and untrue. The place to begin was with young people and Mr. Parr stressed the fact that the 1944 Education Act made religious instruction obligatory in all schools—it was, indeed, the only subject which was compulsory. This opened a door for "an invasion of our schools by the Spirit of Christ through the New Testament". If the purpose of the Society was more than the distribution of the Scriptures, was in fact the conversion of men to Jesus Christ, it could not rest content either with the achievements of the past or with its vast overseas work : for if it did, then the source of Christian Truth, the spring from which that truth had flowed out from this country to the world, would dry up. Moreover, with the scientific advances of recent years—which had put great power over nature in men's hands—time was no longer on our side and it was now or never : a choice (vide Deuteronomy 30) of life or death.

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During the course of a visit which Sir Frederick Bourne, chairman of the B.F.B.S. Translations Sub- Committee, made to the Gold Coast, as an adviser on the preparation of that country's new Constitution, he was able—at the request of the Sub-Committee—to get in touch with those engaged in translation and revision work in the languages of the Gold Coast.

*

The Rev. W. D. Reynolds, a former Baptist missionary in the Congo, is now visiting that country on behalf of the B.F.B.S. Translations Department in order to investigate the relation between Congo-Swahili and Ituri-Swahili, with regard to future Bible translation work in those two languages.

The B.F.B.S. appeared in a television programme for the first time on 8th March. The programme, prepared by the Rev. B. J. Tidball (the Society's Secretary for Youth and Education) gave a general picture of the Society's work in all parts of the world.

The B.F.B.S. arrangement of the A.B.S. film "How the Bible came to us" (the film has been shortened by one-third) has also been projected on a B.B.C. television programme, on two consecutive Sunday evenings.

Germany

The *Stuttgart Bible Society*, in co-operation with other German Bible Societies and with some help from Switzerland, has now started with the production of the first edition (10,000 copies) of the Bible in Bali (Cameroons), the translation of which has been completed by a missionary of the Basle Missionary Society, the Rev. A. Vielhauer. In the last few years Mr. Vielhauer has been revising his translation with the help of the Rev. Elisa Ndifon, a member of the Bali group.

The same Society is printing a New Testament in the Truk language which is spoken in the Zentralkarolinen. The Rev. R. Neumaier, of the Liebenzeller Mission, has prepared the text.

The "Bibelwerk," which is the body federating Bible Societies at work in the D.D.R. (Eastern Germany), held important meetings last January. Besides a session of the Bibelwerk itself, attended by representatives of all societies, meetings took place with representatives of the Free Churches, with the leaders of the people's mission (Volksmission) of the various State (provincial) churches and with the Eastern Churches' Conference, a body bringing together the leaders of all the State provincial churches in Eastern Germany.

The main object of these meetings was to improve the contacts between the Bible Societies and the churches and more particularly to encourage the churches and their evangelistic organs to share more fully in the aims and actions of the Bible Societies, making a more definite and conscious use of the Bible in their life and activity.

It was the first time that the German Bible Societies had had a formal meeting with representatives of the Free Churches in Germany ; it was also the first official appearance of the Bibelwerk at the Eastern Churches' Conference.

Again in January, the General Secretary of the Bibelwerk—the Rev. Dr. Kurt Zabel—addressed a meeting of representatives of all organisations active in the parishes : women's organisations, men's groups, youth groups, the Gustav-Adolf diaspora relief work movement for rural church evangelism, etc. Closer relations have thus been established between the Bibelwerk and those bodies, and increased co-operation is to be expected as the outcome of the conversations.

India

Vinoba Bhave, well-known disciple of Gandhi, who leads India's Bhoodan (land gift) movement, recently expressed his views on the work of Christian missionaries in an interview with a physician from a government hospital, in connection with the

competition met from a neighbouring mission hospital. "Neither cheap medicine, nor propaganda is responsible for the mission hospital's attraction", said Bhave. "The real reason is the Book which accompanies the medicine. One hospital gives medicine only for the body, the other gives also food for the soul". "But are they justified in carrying on their religious propaganda?" asked the physician. "We cannot stop them from doing that", Bhave answered. "They are not carrying on any anti-social or anti-government activities. They are delivering only the message of Jesus".

*

Bishop J. W. Pickett, Methodist Bishop in New Delhi, reported last November that the campaign of distribution commemorating the centenary of the Methodist Church in India was proceeding splendidly. "Every District Superintendent reporting to the Delhi Conference, which met last week had an encouraging story to tell about the interest of Christians and non-Christian alike in obtaining copies of the Word of God . . . One thing that is producing a sense of urgency in relation to this campaign for Bible distribution is a growing sense of antagonism to the Church on the part of a considerable section of the Hindu community.

"The people who have usually been friendly, are in some measure turning against the Church. On the other hand, a larger and larger number of people are enquiring with serious purpose concerning the Gospel. More educated Hindus are converted these days than in any year before Independence. Perhaps it is to be expected that India should go through a period of trial and stress like this before she settles to an orderly democratic government with complete freedom of religion and with inter-religious and inter-racial understanding".

Japan

Seventy colporteurs were at work for the *Japan Bible Society* during 1955. Thirty of them were full-time workers, all of them with more than five years' service with the Bible Society; the others worked on a commission basis. The full-time colporteurs were organised in teams and sent to areas where it would have been difficult for individual workers to go alone. Twelve different areas were thus visited and over 380,000 Scriptures circulated in this way, about one-fifth of the total circulation.

The colporteurs, reports Mr. Miyakoda (General Secretary of the Japan Bible Society), unanimously spoke of the excellent co-operation they had been given by the local churches and missionaries. Many pastors and missionaries not only provided accommodation for the colporteurs, but had gone out with them distributing the Scriptures, always inviting them to witness and speak about Bible work at evening meetings. Colporteurs have in this way stimulated the starting of auxiliaries and enlisting members in different local places. Mr. Ishikawa, Colportage Secretary of the Society, has been occupied in taking his puppet show to the places visited by the colporteurs as well as to meetings arranged for the new supporters.

Korea

From a report sent in by the Rev. Young Bin Im, General Secretary of the *Korean Bible Society*, we quote the following:

"Theological controversy is one of the serious maladies attacking the Church. Inequalities in the distribution of foreign relief is another cause of the churches' travail. The Christian brotherly love manifested in material help, has sometimes been misdirected and produced jealousy among brothers.

"The Church will come to know the causes of her travail and cure them when she is willing to hear the Command of the Lord, and follow it obediently and humbly. In spite of this travail, however, the Church continues to expand. There are no reliable statistics, but those available are as follows (the figures are for South Korea only) : It may be safely said that there are 5,500 churches and 950,000 Church members on the Protestant side. On the Roman Catholic side the figure is variously placed at a quarter to half a million. Statisticians are therefore agreed that it is safe to say that the million mark has long since been passed. Of North Korea we have no reliable information and cannot even hazard a guess at the number of Christians there.

The saying that the Bible Society is an organisation which promotes skill in printing and book binding in mission lands seems true. By producing Scriptures in Korea, the Bible Society is helping to raise the standard of the printers and book binders a great deal, even in this period of economic adjustment. One interesting illustration is the improvement in the quality of book binding cloth. One manufacturer of book binding cloth in Taegu opened business with the Society. At first the binding cloth was of extremely poor quality, but he was willing to accept our criticism and advice and to improve his product. This is still far from the best, but he is on the way towards making good cloth.

The Korean Bible Society is dependent on outside sources for the production of most of the Bibles sold ; it is our aim to do all the Gospels and New Testaments in Korea".

Mr. Im also refers to the economic difficulties in Korea, devaluated currency, inflation, squeeze on bank loans, all developments which create countless difficulties for Bible Society work and considerably hamper the Society in its activity.

Lebanon

For the first time, the American Bible Society Bible reading list has been translated and published in Arabic. This list, which is the only known publication of the kind in that language, has on the whole received a warm welcome. The number of copies printed was 5,000.

Netherlands

Dr. Louis Onvlee, one of the language experts of the *Netherlands Bible Society*, has now finally returned to Holland, after spending nearly thirty years at Sumba, Indonesia, interrupted only by furlough periods and a term of imprisonment during the Japanese occupation. He plans to give a final check to the Wewewa and Kambera translations of the New Testament, and to continue his work of compiling a dictionary of both languages.

*

From November 29th to December 3rd, 1955, a visit to Amsterdam Bible House was paid by the Rev. M. Mikolasek, who is directing translation work into Bangangte, one of the languages of the French Cameroons. His main purpose was to establish personal contact with the Netherlands Bible Society. That Society hopes to give expert help to Mr. Mikolasek and his ten helpers, mainly African, in addition to the financial help it gives to the Société des Missions Evangéliques.

■

At its last meeting, the General Committee of the N.B.S. appointed Dr. J. Voorhoeve, of Amsterdam, as a translator for Surinam. Dr. Voorhoeve, who is now 32, teaches Dutch language and literature at Utrecht.

He will be in charge of the revision of the New Testament in the Surinam language, so-called Negro-English. When his task is finished, he will turn his attention to the completion of the translation of the Old Testament in the same language.

*

During World War II the N.B.S. published a New Testament in Dutch printed right across the page and without verse numbers. This was the first edition of its kind in Holland. A new edition, in the same style, has now been published, using the new Dutch translation. It appears with an attractive cover.

*

Another edition of the N.B.S. is St. John's Gospel in Kapauku, a language spoken in the western part of New Guinea. The translation was made by Miss Doble, a C.M.A. missionary working in that region.

*

Both colportage vans now used by the N.B.S. are producing encouraging results. In Smilde, a rural area in the north of the country, covering some ten miles and with a population of about 7,000 a total of at least fls.3,500 (£329) was collected in four days. The local pastors gave active and enthusiastic help.

*

The renovation of the Netherlands Bible House in 1954 revealed that the construction of this seventeenth century building was not strong enough to carry heavy stocks of paper and books for an indefinite period. Since the N.B.S. is in urgent need at the present time of enlarged office space, it was decided to convert some of the former storage lofts into offices. Before carrying out this programme, however, suitable storage place for the stocks had to be found. Since this proved impracticable in the city of Amsterdam, a convenient building site has been acquired in Weesp, a nearby town easily reached by road and water. As soon as the necessary permits are received, it is intended to erect a warehouse there, including binding premises, so as to avoid unnecessary risk and expense of transport.

*

The N.B.S. Committee for Youth and School work, housed in the headquarters premises in Amsterdam has recently been in contact with two training colleges in the city. As a result some 120 students have had an opportunity of becoming familiar with Bible Society work. A special programme was drawn up which included a day's work with a colportage van, and visits to Rembrandt House (where a collection of Rembrandt's drawings and etchings on New Testament subjects was displayed), to a printing shop and to a meeting of a Translation Committee. After these visits the students reported on their experiences and undertook to devote one of the lessons they give in the primary schools to Bible Society work. It is hoped to find opportunities for fostering similar contacts elsewhere in Holland.

*

Holland is still feeling the impact of a nation-wide campaign to read the Bible that went under the attractive title of "The Great Trek". Many who started on that journey of daily Bible reading during the winter of 1954-55, are now members of Bible study groups. Utrecht in particular is full of such groups. Meanwhile, another campaign of a different kind, linked with the 10th anniversary of "Kerk en Wereld", is being prepared. A poster, showing two hands meeting in front of the Cross, which is set against a background of the world, announces the campaign. Its

title this time is "Together in the World". A booklet, helping groups to prepare, raises all the burning questions of personal relations—man and wife, church member and outsider, employer and worker—setting each within a Bible study outline. This year, several large conferences will be held in different parts of Holland, taking on something of the character of the German Kirchentage, but much smaller and localised. They will mostly be held in small towns, declaring to all that live there that the Bible, properly studied, is a valuable guide to the perlexing problem of personal relations in our day. "Met de Ander in de Wereld" is the Dutch slogan, meaning "Together in the World". Man is not alone. Bible study is the centre of all this activity and a special committee, initially set up by the Netherlands Bible Society, is sponsoring the campaign.

Pakistan

"Our plan for door to door visitation with Scriptures for the winter", writes the Rev. Canon Chandu Ray from the Bible House in Lahore, "has been received most enthusiastically by the youth of the Church. Already several hundred young people have banded themselves to carry out this campaign in seven cities in Pakistan. Each of these cities has been divided into sectors. Each house is then systematically visited, and a copy of the Gospel according to St. Matthew is presented, with a promise that a second visit will be paid within a few days, to answer any questions arising from the Word of God.

"A second visit is then planned, when young people go two by two. One remains a silent partner in prayer, the other answers the questions. The following day the silent partner answers the questions and the other remains quietly in prayer. In this way both have experience of the ministry of prayer and witnessing. It has been emphasised that the Holy Spirit is the One Who guides at such times in answering the questions. At the end of the second visit, public meetings have been arranged for the exposition of the Word of God. During the second visit the remaining Gospel portions and New Testaments are also offered for sale.

"Those who show interest will be given an evangelisation leaflet in which a story is printed from Luke's Gospel, with some pointed questions calling for decision. There is also in preparation a Correspondence Course to help the enquirers.

"In these seven cities concentrated work will be done through the Visual Aid Unit which the British and Foreign Bible Society has so generously sent for evangelistic work. In this way every effort is being made to enrol youth in the work of evangelism. We need your prayers and your help . . . ."

In a more recent letter, Canon Chandu Ray writes : "We are getting a great response to out 'door-to-door visitation with Scriptures' campaign. The Lord is being uplifted and I praise God for many who are bearing witness. Some 1,600 young people have joined the campaign". The American Bible Society sent 100,000 Gospel portions as a contribution to that effort.

Scotland

Reports received by the *National Bible Society of Scotland* indicate that the magazine Gospels which the Society has provided free of charge for use in "Tell Scotland" visitation campaigns, have been proving very useful. They provide an opening topic of conversation and are generally accepted with great interest, especially where there are children in the home. 100,000 copies of St. Luke's Gospel have been completely used up, and a new edition of 50,000

copies of the Acts of the Apostles is now on order.

*

Bouroum Bouroum is the name of a village in French West Africa, not far from its frontier with the Gold Coast, where the Rev. C. S. Benington and his wife have recently arrived to undertake new translation work into the local language, Lobi. Some years ago Mr. Benington prepared St. John's Gospel in Lobi. Now the National Bible Society of Scotland has sent him out for five years in the hope that he may find it possible to complete the New Testament. The Society will then arrange for its printing. There are not very many Lobi Christians yet, but the provision of at least the New Testament in their language will help greatly in the establishment of a church among them.

Sudan

On 17th February last, a new Bible House of the British and Foreign Bible Society was opened in Khartoum. The Chairman at the opening ceremony was the Rt. Rev. O. C. Allison, Bishop in the Sudan, and among the guests present were the Prime Minister of the Sudan and two of his Cabinet Ministers, representatives of the Church Missionary Society, of the Greek Orthodox Church, the Coptic Church and the Ethiopian Legation. The Rev. James M. Roe, Agency Secretary for the Bible Society, addressed the gathering on behalf of the Society's General Committee in London, and the Rev. L. V. D. Ashley, Assistant Secretary in Addis Ababa, took part in the ceremonies. The keys of the new building were given into the care of the Rev. P. A. Hamilton, Assistant Secretary in the Sudan. Scripture readings were given in English, Arabic, Amharic, Bari, Sudanese Arabic and Greek. Later the guests were invited to inspect the new premises and to see Bible Society films shown in the Committee Room.

Sweden

The *Swedish Bible Society* is to contribute Sw.Kr.150,000 (£10,360) towards the production of the "Jubilee" Tamil Bible, a revision of the Larsen version, which the B.F.B.S. is issuing this spring as a contribution to the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the arrival of the first Lutheran missionary in Tranquebar, India. Last year marked the 240th anniversary of the publication of the first New Testament in Tamil.

In order to arouse interest in Sweden for this undertaking, the Swedish Bible Society published a 64-page booklet giving useful data on the project itself, articles on the relation between Bible work and missionary activity, and information on Bible Society work in the whole world.

Switzerland

A further step has been taken in the new line of development of the *Swiss Bible Society* (see BULLETIN No. 25, p.4) in the appointment of the Rev. O. Naegeli as full-time secretary, with headquarters near Zurich. A special donation in Switzerland has made that step possible. The B.F.B.S. has also promised to cover part of the administration expenses of the Society, in order to help in its new start.

During the past year the Swiss Bible Societies contributed an amount of £2,500 to Bible Society work in various parts of the world.

United States of America

The theme "The Bible Speaks To-day" has been chosen by the *American Bible Society* for the 1956 Worldwide Bible Reading observance, a programme involving the daily reading of passages from the Scriptures during the period from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

Dr. James V. Claypool, who is in charge of this Bible reading programme, reports that 1955 was the greatest year ever in distributing Bible reading bookmarks. It took 43 tons of paper to do the Worldwide Bible Reading printing. Eight college students took two months of the summer to stuff 172,000 packet envelopes which were addressed to ministers in some 80 denominations. The filled mail sacks took 4 trucks, and 5 men four hours just to load the sacks and get them to the post office.

Although the Bible Society printed 14,800,000 bookmarks, nearly three million more than in the previous year, so numerous were the requests for the reading lists that the supply was exhausted before Thanksgiving, the day on which the Bible Reading Programme starts.

One hundred and seventy-four television and seven hundred and fifty radio stations contributed free time to the Society for the programme.

*

Forty-seven denominations were represented at the last annual meeting of the Advisory Council of the American Bible Society, at which the Society's proposed budget and programme are submitted for examination and commendation to the Society's Board. Delegates from six other denominations had been prevented from attending for various reasons. In addition, thirteen women's church organisations from eight denominations were present at the meeting.

Two significant statements appear in the report of the Findings Committee of the Council. They are :

"We call attention to the fact that the American Bible Society is related to the denominations in a unique manner and is in a real sense the agency of the denominations in the task of translating, publishing and distributing God's Word. We recognize, also, the indispensable service which the Society renders to the denominations in their respective missionary tasks. We rejoice in the privilege which is ours to work together in such a joint endeavour. We recognize that if the churches were to do this work individually, the costs would be immeasurably higher. Hence, we acknowledge the responsibility of the denominations in supporting the Society and in accepting the increases which come in our budget due to emergency needs and expanded programme".

"We recommend further that consideration be given to increasing the quotas given from the denominations that the churches which gave $826,000 in 1954 increase their goals to total $1,400,000 to be reached by 1958. We recommend that each church accept what it regards as a fair share of this total".

*

A new English Reference Bible (King James' Version) is to be published by the A.B.S. The new system of references which the Society's translations department has recently prepared will be used, as well as a new set of section headings. A 45,000-line concordance will be appended to the book.

*

Two administrative assistants have been appointed to the Translations and Library Department of the A.B.S. This measure was taken in order to enable the Head Librarian, Miss M. Hills, to begin work on the revision of the "Book of a Thousand Tongues" and the Historical Catalogue of Printed Scriptures.

The number of translation projects to which the A.B.S. Translations Department is at present committed has grown from 15 in 1943 to 138 in 1955, and from 2 revision projects to 22. Some of these projects are shared with other Societies.

United Bible Societies

The following information has been prepared on behalf of the U.B.S. by Miss M. Hills, A.B.S. Librarian :

As at the end of December, 1955 :

Languages in which the whole Bible has been published...	207
Languages in which a complete New Testament has been published	265
Languages in which at least a Gospel or other whole book has been published ...	620
TOTAL languages in which some part of the Bible has been published	1,092

Scriptures were published for the first time in :

Chinantec	Mexico	Mark	ABS
Chontal of Oaxaca	,,	,,	,,
Kapauku	New Guinea	Mark/John	BFBS/NBS
Otomi of Mezquital	Mexico	Luke	ABS
Pila	Dahomy	Mark	SIM
*Nyemba	Angola	,,	BFBS
Tiruray	Philippines	,,	ABS
Tzutujil	Guatemala	,,	,,

*Previously listed under "Selections," and so included in previous lists.

The Bible was completed last year in *Luvale,* a language spoken in Northern Rhodesia, Belgian Congo and Angola, by the publication of the Old Testament by the A.B.S.

New Testaments were published for the first time in *Bari* (Sudan), *Asho Southern Chin* (Burma), *Conob* (Guatemala), *Gbari:Matai* (Nigeria), *Hula* (Papua), and *Kim* (French Equatorial Africa).

There are some 80 or more languages, many of them previously listed, in which short passages or collections of passages have been published, but in which no complete book of the Bible has appeared.

Miscellaneous

In a short essay published early this year on "The influence of Church music on modern music", Dr. O. Söhngen, chairman of the Berlin Bible Society, describes in a striking fashion the remarkable 'rapprochement' between music and the Church which has been the mark of the last two or three decades. Devoting a paragraph to the question of the Bible, Dr. Söhngen writes :

"It is astonishing to what an extent to-day the Bible has again become a resource for musical composition. This trend began in 1923 with Honegger's "King David", and has continued up to the first performance of Arnold Schönberg's last work, "Moses and Aaron", which concerns the question of whether the nature of the world is purely material, or whether faith does not reveal its true depth to be its foundation in God. Perhaps one can still say of Honegger's early work that here the biblical subject was taken more or less as literary material, and thus in later works—not only in Honegger's—it is obvious that the choice of biblical themes implies at the same time a confession of faith. As examples we would point to the following : Honegger bases his "Dance of Death" on the 37th chapter of the Book of Ezekiel, in which an account is given of the way in which the life-giving spirit of God reaches down to the valley of dry bones. Stravinsky's "Symphony of Psalms" should be mentioned in this connection, but also his cantata "Babel", for narrator, male choir and orchestra, which the composer wrote as part of an interesting cycle of biblical episodes by Nathaniel Shilkret, in 1944, together with Schönberg, Shilkret himself, Tansman, Castelnuovo and Toch. Similarly Ernst Kreneks "Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae", Frank Martin's oratorio "Golgotha" and oratical cantata "Et in terra pax", Willy

Burkhard's oratorio "Das Gesicht Jesaias", Wolfgang Fortner's oratorical scene "The Sacrifice of Isaac", Herman Reutter's opera "Saul", Luigi Dallapiccola's religious work "Job", which at its climax quotes the "Te Deum laudamus" and "Te Dominum confitemur". We must not omit the significant fact that Schönberg's last work set to music the 130th Psalm in the original Hebrew language. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord". The men who produce such religious works do not wish thereby only to make music, but wish with their music and with the means available nowadays to express something which is beyond the scope of music alone, and at the same time in a mysterious way supports it. Thus they take part in the work of preaching the Gospel which the Church, the fellowship of believers, calls into being and sustains.

AUDIO VISUAL AID NOTES

Films

Two films were recommended by "Sight and Sound", a bi-monthly bulletin sponsored jointly by the North American Committee of the World Council of Christian Education and the National Council of Churches of Christ. We quote the two reviews :

A Boy and His Bible

Film, sound, 30 min., b & w, rental 22s. 6d. Producers : Family Films of America (1954).

A young and earnest Christian lad becomes an "office boy" in the local newspaper offices. He refuses to be scared of the stern editor, who is agnostic. The rest of the staff are surprised when he gets permission to install and decorate a small Christmas tree, which his pastor has given him. Later, the minister calls to see the editor, an old friend, inviting him to come to church, but with no success.

With so much evil and suffering to report to his newspaper, the editor finds it difficult to compose an appropriate Christmas editorial. While hearing the Christmas chimes from a nearby church, he calls for a Bible from which he seeks inspiration. The editorial is a great success ; he is a changed man and presents Bibles to all his staff as Christmas gifts.

A story full of fun and meaning. Very few will fail to be gripped by the sincerity of "the boy" although one or two situations appear rather forced.

Recommended more particularly for young people's and adult groups, although seniors will enjoy it, too. Some American customs may need explanation. Particularly suitable for use during the Christmas season for direct evangelism, to promote Bible study and personal Christian living.

The Stones Cry Out

Film sound, 45 min., colour. For terms apply to distributors. (N.B. It is a condition of hire that the entire film is shown.) (1954) Producers : Moody Institute of Science, Chicago.

The scenes consist almost entirely of shots of ruins of Old Testament cities which the prophets, and Ezekiel in particular, predicted would be destroyed or desolated.

The first example is of Ezekiel's prophecy concerning the Golden

Gate through which Christ entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Petra was carved out of solid rock. Its people were cultured and prosperous. They felt safe in an indestructible mountain fortress. But Petra's doom was prophesied. Later, a new trade route was opened, by-passing the city and killing its trade. To-day, Petra is deserted and lifeless. Similar fates awaited Edom and Babylon, Phoenicia, Tyre and Sidon.

The information imparted is interesting and, despite the sameness of the stories, the attention is retained. The historical proof of the Old Testament prophecy is convincing—perhaps more so than the promise of God in the New Testament, with which the film ends. Technically, it is first-class, but would be much more effective for its purpose if it were considerably shorter. It is the least effective of the Moody films seen.

Acceptable for discussion and Bible study groups. It could also be used in some evangelistic worship services. Age-range : *Youth* (14) *and Adults.*

Equipment

From the Bulletin of the Radio and Audio-Visual Service Council of the National Christian Council of India, we quote the following information : "We are working with a Japanese manufacturer on the production of a kerosene slide and filmstrip projector. It should be considerably cheaper than the SVE, being simpler in construction, but will be sturdy and the lighting system will be at least as efficient. We have received requests for a number of these from the Philippines. If you are interested, please let us know.

A British firm (Visual Communications Ltd., 17, Denbigh Street, London, S.W.1) is offering a "VC" portable filmstrip projector and power unit, at a total cost of £22. The power unit consists of a strong metal box holding a battery and a hand generator, which can be used to feed the battery during or after the projection. The unit is fixed with straps and can easily be carried on the back. A clip is provided inside the case for the projector, leaving storage space for filmstrips.

The light power of the projector is equal to a 250-watt lamp, and the weight of the apparatus is 7 lbs. 10 ozs. without the case and 10 lbs. 11 ozs. with the case.

*

The following offer has come from the Bible House in New York :

The American Bible Society has sets of the old size, 3¼ by 4in. stereopticon glass slides. They are hand coloured and are contained in a fibre shipping case ; each set weighs approximately 10 lbs. and has a "reading manuscript" printed in booklet form in English. This material was prepared for free-loan to American churches and was used extensively during the years of approximately 1920-1940. Such material is authentic but facts are of course out-of-date. While each emphasizes some aspect of the Society's work in particular, each also has material relating to the general Bible Society cause. The last several slides of each set consist of the words of a hymn to be sung by the congregation at the conclusion of the showing.

3 sets "The Old Book Finding New Friends"—44 slides.

2 sets "The Book Goes Forth"—46 slides.

1 set "Every Man in His Own Tongue"—55 slides.

Any member Society having use for material of this kind should address a request to H. H. Ragatz, American Bible Society, 440, Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N.Y., U.S.A. While slides last, these will be sent free of charge and prepaid.